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Executive Board of the United Nations Children's Fund

Report on the first and second regular sessions and annual session of 1999

Economic and Social Council
Official Records, 1999
Supplement No. 14

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Part one

FIRST REGULAR SESSION OF 1999

Held at United Nations Headquarters from 19-22 and 25 January 1999

I. ORGANIZATION OF THE SESSION

A. Election of officers for 1999

1. The officers of the Executive Board for the year 1999 were elected as follows:

President:	H.E. Prof. Ibrahim A. Gambari (Nigeria)
Vice-Presidents:	H.E. Ms. Akmaral Kh. Arystanbekova (Kazakhstan) Mr. Fikret Mamedali Pashayev (Azerbaijan) H.E. Dr. John William Ashe (Antigua and Barbuda) Mr. Carl Christian Hasselbalch (Denmark)

B. Election of Executive Board representatives to the joint committees for the biennium 1999-2000

2. The President recalled that the Executive Board would elect five UNICEF representatives to the World Health Organization (WHO)/UNICEF/United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) Coordinating Committee on Health (CCH) and five to the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)/UNICEF Joint Committee on Education (JCE). The members would be elected in their personal capacity, representing the five regional groups. There were also five alternates, elected from the same country as the representatives. Members and their alternates should be senior persons with relevant professional and UNICEF Board expertise, able to provide technical guidance and policy advise to the concerned organizations. The President of the Executive Board would serve as an ex officio member of the UNESCO/UNICEF JCE. (See the annex, decision 1999/1, for the text of the decision adopted by the Executive Board.)

C. Opening statements by the President and the Executive Director

3. The President thanked outgoing Board members for their cooperation during the past year. He said that during the course of his association with UNICEF during 1998, he had gained enormous respect for the organization as well as for the Executive Director, noting that UNICEF was one of the most committed and effective organizations in the United Nations system. Commenting on the Board's ability to take decisions by consensus, he reminded delegations of the importance of maintaining this spirit of cooperation.

4. In welcoming delegations to the first regular session of the last year of the twentieth century, the Executive Director also expressed her deep appreciation to the outgoing President, and congratulated his successor on his election. She spoke about the importance of this juncture in the history of UNICEF. It would be the tenth anniversary year of the adoption of the Convention on the Rights of the Child; a year in which the world would try to reach the year 2000 goals for child survival, development, protection and participation; and a year in which the pace of planning would be stepped up to energize a global movement for child rights in conjunction with the General Assembly's special session in 2001. She addressed the issue of humanitarian emergencies and the challenges they posed. Despite the enormous strain placed on the organization by the rapid proliferation of humanitarian emergencies, UNICEF, she emphasized, would continue efforts to do battle on all other fronts to advocate for the protection of children's rights, to help meet their basic needs and to expand their opportunities to reach their full potential. (See E/ICEF/1999/CRP.2 for the full text of her statement.)

D. Adoption of the agenda

5. The agenda of the session, as contained in document E/ICEF/1999/2, was adopted. The agenda contained the following items:

Item 1: Opening of the session:

(a) Election of the officers of the Executive Board for 1999

(b) Election of Executive Board representatives to the WHO/UNICEF/UNFPA CCH and to the UNESCO/UNICEF JCE

(c) Statements by the President and the Executive Director

Item 2: Adoption of the provisional agenda and timetable and organization of work

Item 3: Report of the Executive Director (Part I): Annual report to the Economic and Social Council

Item 4: Resource mobilization strategy for UNICEF

Item 5: Private Sector Division (PSD) work plan and proposed budget for 1999

Item 6: Country notes

Item 7: Summary of mid-term reviews (MTRs) and major evaluations of country programmes

Item 8: Progress in implementing the biennial support budget for 1998-1999

Item 9: Financial matters:*

(a) UNICEF financial report and audited financial statements for the biennium ended 31 December 1997 and report of the Board of Auditors

(b) Report to the United Nations Board of Auditors and the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions

Item 10: 1999 UNICEF Maurice Pate Award

Item 11: Other matters

Item 12: Closing remarks by the Executive Director and the President

Item 13: Joint meeting of the Executive Boards of UNICEF and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)/UNFPA

6. In accordance with rule 50.2 and the annex of the Rules of Procedure, the Secretary of the Executive Board announced that 78 observer delegations had submitted credentials for the session. In addition, 3 intergovernmental organizations and 17 non-governmental organizations (NGOs) had submitted credentials.

7. A delegation said that there were many important items on the agenda for the session, especially the resource mobilization strategy. The Executive Board could not abdicate responsibility for mobilizing resources for UNICEF from Governments to the private sector, and she urged all members to support innovative fund-raising measures. Given the importance of this and other issues, delegations should conduct the session's business in a transparent, efficient and mature manner.

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* Deferred from the second regular Board session in September 1998.

II. DELIBERATIONS OF THE EXECUTIVE BOARD

A. Report of the Executive Director (Part I): Annual report to the Economic and Social Council

8. The Executive Director and the Director, Office of United Nations Affairs and External Relations, introduced the report (E/ICEF/1999/4 (Part I)). The Executive Director highlighted the good progress made over the last year on United Nations reform, while noting that more needed to be done. Progress had been made in the areas of common premises and services, harmonization and the selection of resident coordinators. The Director stated that in response to Economic and Social Council resolution 1998/27 of 28 July 1998, the United Nations funds and programmes, in consultation with the United Nations Development Group (UNDG), would prepare for the Council a concise, consolidated list of issues that were central to improved coordination of operational activities, particularly with regard to the triennial policy review. The current report used a common format with that of UNDP, UNFPA and the World Food Programme (WFP) to facilitate inter-agency comparisons.

9. A number of delegations expressed their appreciation for the comprehensive report and oral updates, noting improvements over previous years in terms of analysis and focus. However, more work in that direction was needed, including a thorough analysis of lessons learned, a selected focus on key issues and problem-oriented reporting. Two delegations saw the need to draw a closer link between this report and the medium-term plan (MTP).

10. Some speakers stressed that the most important elements of United Nations reform should be to increase efficiency, improve cohesion and strengthen the impact of United Nations operations at the country level. Addressing the concern about the costs involved implementing the reform measures, the secretariat stated that headquarters costs were down and were not expected to increase.

11. On the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF), the main concerns expressed by delegations included retaining government ownership and participation; that it be country-driven; the need to go to scale; participation of the entire United Nations system and Bretton Woods institutions; the revision of some current planning mechanisms; quantifiable benefits; and the possible ongoing costs in terms of money and staff time. One delegation hoped to see a Pacific island country included among the pilot countries in the next phase of the UNDAF process. Some delegations reaffirmed the importance of ensuring the full integration of women into the UNDAF process. Concerning cooperation with the World Bank, the secretariat informed the Board of ongoing cooperative activities in the area of girls' education.

12. A number of speakers stressed the need to avoid compromising programmes through greater interdependency among United Nations agencies, and maintaining the role of UNICEF in micro-credit programmes to social support.

13. The secretariat noted the comments concerning the achievement of the year 2000 goals and informed the Board that at the annual Board session in June, the secretariat would be presenting a number of reports specific to the goals. In addition, part II of the Executive Director's report would examine achievements measured against the MTP.

14. Regarding the number of United Nations Houses, the secretariat said that there was a total of 30 such Houses designated by the Secretary-General.

15. With regard to the World Summit for Social Development, a number of speakers mentioned the role that UNICEF could play in the eradication of poverty and social integration. (See the annex, decision 1999/6, for the text of the decision adopted by the Executive Board.)

B. Resource mobilization strategy for UNICEF

16. The report on "The UNICEF resource mobilization strategy" (E/ICEF/1999/5) was introduced by the Executive Director and the Deputy Executive Director. The Executive Director underscored the rationale and underlying principles of the strategy; the need to continue with efforts to increase the effectiveness in the use of funds, including improved contribution management; and the interrelationship between the resource mobilization strategy, the MTP and the Executive Director's annual report to the Board. In explaining the link between those key documents, the Executive Director emphasized the importance of distinguishing between the funding target of the MTP, which was intended to be a financial challenge, and the more conservative financial plan, which was based on a careful analysis of projected income and used for country programme and support budget allocations. The distinctions and linkages between the MTP funding target, the financial plan, financial planning and budgeting, and reporting on results and outcomes were subsequently further expanded upon by the Deputy Executive Director through a power point presentation.

17. Almost all delegations addressing this agenda item commented favourably on the quality of the document which had clearly tried to address the concerns, suggestions and comments made by Board members and observers during the various discussions held on this subject in the course of the preceding year. Several speakers reiterated their support for the underlying principles of the proposed resource mobilization strategy, in particular the need for increased and greater predictability of core resources; the importance of burden sharing among donors, while recognizing the voluntary nature of government contributions; and the intergovernmental nature of UNICEF and its Board. One delegation cautioned that the call for increased burden sharing should not undermine the voluntary nature of contributions. Some delegations, in the course of their interventions, also cautioned that the secretariat would need to consider the implications of a continued increase in the ratio of private sector funding, in particular its impact on the intergovernmental nature of the organization.

18. While a number of delegations considered the funding target of a 7 per cent annual growth rate in income as overly ambitious, others expressed support for this target, noting the importance of reporting on results and the need for improved results-based budgeting and reporting. One delegation indicated that a system of logging and tracking progress (i.e. log frames) could help to improve results-based reporting. Another delegation proposed that the annual report of the Executive Director be reformatted to facilitate this purpose. (See the annex, decision 1999/7, for the text of a decision concerning part II of the Executive Director's annual report that was adopted by the Executive Board under this agenda item.) Several speakers expressed appreciation to the secretariat for attempting to clarify and draw the link between the MTP, budgeting and results-based reporting. A number of delegations mentioned the ongoing discussions on this subject at the UNDP/UNFPA Executive Board and encouraged an exchange of information on the subject among the agencies.

19. Several delegations expressed support for the recommendation that Governments pledge their contributions early in the year and, to the extent possible, provide an indicative pledge for future years. Two delegations indicated that their Governments would not be able to comply with the time-frame proposed by the secretariat for pledging in January, but that they would continue to announce their pledges as early as possible in the year. One speaker, supported by several others, suggested that the first regular Board session be held in February to facilitate the announcement by Board members of their pledges during the session.

20. Positive support for supplementary fund-raising using a thematic, multi-country approach was noted by several delegations. A donor delegation suggested that this approach should also include a multi-agency approach. While welcoming this approach in principle, another speaker said that the mechanisms would need to be in place to ensure quality reporting with the necessary country details. On the subject of donor reporting, various delegations expressed positive interest in the proposal of providing an annual progress report on a given

sector within a country, and noted that quality donor reports would be required. One delegation expressed dissatisfaction with the quality and timeliness of the financial and progress reports.

21. The proposal put forward by the secretariat in the resource mobilization strategy for greater predictability and increased flexibility in the allocation of emergency funding was commented on positively by several delegations. However, other delegations said that they would prefer a strict earmarking of emergency funds. Still other speakers emphasized the importance of having the management systems in place to be able to report in a transparent manner on the flexible use of funds for emergencies. Another delegation requested clarification about flexible emergency funds and framework agreements.

22. In responding to the various delegations, the Executive Director stressed that the issue of the ratio between public and private sector funding was largely in the hands of Governments. She also said that the 7 per cent target was intended to be a challenge, but not an unrealistic one. She assured delegations that the secretariat agreed that the systems needed to be in place to ensure complete accountability, transparency and quality reporting. In response to a query about the concept of "tailor-made" strategies for each donor country, she clarified that this referred to internal strategies aimed at a more effective targeting of donor Governments, bearing in mind official development assistance (ODA) policies and priorities. (See the annex, decision 1999/8, for the text of the decision adopted by the Executive Board.)

23. Following the adoption of the decision, several delegations commented on its significance. A number of speakers found the process of achieving consensus to be constructive, transparent and even inspiring. One speaker said that the consensus text reflected the views and aspirations of all sides for UNICEF to pursue its work on behalf of the world's children. Another speaker said that the negotiation process had been a positive experience for both donors and programme countries because they had discussed real issues together, and his delegation was ready to build on this experience throughout the year.

C. Private Sector Division work plan and proposed budget for 1999

24. The Executive Board had before it the PSD work plan and proposed budget for 1999 (E/ICEF/1999/AB/L.5). The report was introduced by the Director, PSD, who also presented the highlights of PSD's performance and activities during 1998, including structural reorganization, conversion to a calendar fiscal year and preparation of the new financial and logistical systems as well as income trends and PSD's objectives and strategies for 1999.

25. Some delegations expressed concern that PSD's forecasts for 1999 and beyond were too optimistic given the downward trend of 1997 and the 1998 latest estimates. One delegation stated that even if the division were fully staffed, it would need time to begin operating at its fullest capacity. The Director responded that the 1997 benchmark year was only an interim eight-month period due to the change in the fiscal year, hence the anomaly of 12-month revenues and 8-month expenses for product sales, and the delayed reporting by partners of private sector fund-raising income. He further explained that the volume and revenue forecasts were prepared in consultation with the National Committees. The Director said that there was the potential for increased income from many markets, even those in which UNICEF was already successful. Such market potential could be tapped with the new PSD structure in place, thereby providing improved service capacity to partners; new marketing strategies, including rejuvenated product mix and brochures; a thrust to the corporate sector; and emphasis on brand management.

26. A number of speakers supported PSD's intention to focus on key markets and planned investments, especially for the Nordic countries and Central and Eastern Europe. One delegation said that although it realized that the need to clarify the relationship between National Committees and PSD was an important process, the ongoing PSD reorganization had hampered the joint planning process.

Another speaker stressed the need for a clear definition of the roles and responsibilities between UNICEF and National Committees. The same speaker added that the relationship should be carried out professionally and that the National Committees should adhere to the 25 per cent retention rate. With regard to brand management, one delegation expressed its support, adding that it should not be confused with logo management. It should be remembered that UNICEF stood for children first.

27. In response to the concern expressed by one delegation that the phasing out of PSD activities in some countries would lead to the reduction in geographical awareness of the brand name, the Director said that in some countries PSD business would be handled by third parties to avoid operating costs. In others, where the market was too small to maintain a presence, customers would be able to obtain UNICEF products through a worldwide catalogue house. The Director said that PSD staff in both New York and Geneva were always available for direct, bilateral consultation with individual delegations on specific questions. (See the annex, decision 1999/2, for the text of the decision adopted by the Executive Board.)

D. Country notes

28. The Director, Programme Division, provided an overview of the eight country notes being presented to the Executive Board, explaining how they reflected rights-based approaches to UNICEF programme cooperation and describing the four types of country situations represented therein. He added that two of the countries under review were currently participating in Common Country Assessments (CCAs) and UNDAF.

29. Several speakers commended the Director for his substantive introduction. One delegation noted that the country notes lacked economic data, including on the level of international assistance and specific funding from United Nations agencies. While supporting the call for an overview of the aid situation in the countries in the main sectors in which UNICEF was cooperating, another delegation requested the secretariat to provide additional information on the extent to which bilateral donors were participating in and contributing to the country note process. The same speaker remarked that the programmes were moving in the right direction and that the priorities were clear, with an appropriate strategy mix. Both speakers said that the notes reflected the positive experiences with the UNDAF process and UNICEF collaboration with the World Bank and NGOs. The Director replied that providing data on aid flows would involve a change in the format of the country note and that this would be reviewed. He also clarified that bilateral agencies participated regularly in the country note process, but that the quality of the involvement needed to be monitored.

Eastern and Southern Africa

30. The Regional Director for Eastern and Southern Africa presented the country note for Zimbabwe (E/ICEF/1999/P/L.8), pointing out that HIV/AIDS and armed conflicts were the two major threats to the lives of children in the region. In response, UNICEF was reorienting its country programmes in the region to give the highest possible priority to the control of HIV/AIDS and to mainstream emergency preparedness and response into regular country programming.

31. Delegations addressing this agenda item expressed strong support for the country note and UNICEF work in Zimbabwe. Many speakers welcomed in particular the priority attention given to HIV/AIDS, human rights and community participation. Several speakers noted the importance of focusing on youth participation since young people were the most affected and the most likely to effect change. Thus, there was an urgent need to promote behaviour change through improved life skills training and local capacity-building. In that connection, UNICEF was called upon to strengthen collaboration with NGOs working in the region in the areas of counselling and treatment of AIDS victims. In pledging his country's support to the fight against AIDS, a speaker requested more information on some of the successful practices and experiences already achieved in the region. It was also suggested that UNICEF cooperate with the

secretariat of the Southern African Development Community in its planned new initiatives to fight AIDS in the region. Some speakers expressed concern, however, that UNICEF efforts alone would not be sufficient to roll back the threat. What was needed, they continued, was a broad alliance against AIDS.

32. The representative of the United Nations Joint and Co-sponsored Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) was impressed with the new direction of UNICEF efforts in this area. He mentioned the UNAIDS meeting held to formulate the broad directions of interventions in sub-Saharan Africa, and suggested that the coordination approach be reflected in the final country programme recommendation (CPR). With its innovative approach, UNICEF activities could serve as pilots for other interventions.

33. In response to the comments, the Regional Director noted the involvement of many partners, including the Government, United Nations agencies and UNAIDS. An important part of the strategy, he said, was the empowerment of young women. Zimbabwe was a good example of the appropriateness of a human rights approach.

West and Central Africa

34. The Regional Director for West and Central Africa began her presentation of the country notes for Cape Verde (E/ICEF/1999/P/L.9) and the Niger (E/ICEF/1999/P/L.10) with a brief overview of the situation in the region. She reported on the many serious challenges facing the region which called for special attention from the international community. UNICEF, she said, was responding with emergency interventions, post-conflict rehabilitation and the promotion of increased access to basic social services.

35. A delegation noted the good quality of the Cape Verde country note, stating that future UNICEF actions were clear, well-articulated and seemed grounded in a good analysis of past achievements and lessons learned. The same speaker suggested that the note should have explained why measles immunization coverage had declined since 1995. Another speaker requested clarification of the issue of socio-economic disparity which had been identified as a major problem. He said that the poverty affecting the majority of the population, not disparity, was a major obstacle to social progress. He also questioned the appropriateness of the proposed strategy to shift more resources from supply operations to promoting quality, capacity-building and sustainability of services, suggesting that the strategy should be implemented with flexibility and in close coordination with other partners. The Regional Director agreed that perhaps the analysis of the situation in Cape Verde should have drawn a distinction between disparities in living conditions and the causes of poverty.

36. In commenting on the country note for the Niger, one speaker said that it clearly reflected the problems and needs of the country. He advised UNICEF to maintain close ties with other donors at the field level. Another speaker was encouraged by the decrease in the prevalence of dracunculiasis resulting from the joint efforts of UNICEF and other partners, but said that it should continue to remain among UNICEF priorities in the country until its eradication. The speaker remarked about the vertical nature of many of the past programmes and projects, and suggested that alternative strategies be considered to improve effectiveness. He also suggested that UNICEF and other donors discuss how to address the issue of regional and subregional disparities in this area. Some reservations were expressed about the Vaccine Independence Initiative in view of the financial constraints facing the country. The same delegation stressed the importance of achieving better quality of primary health care through staff training at the local level, while noting that the primary education programme should be global in scope. He added that the ongoing national decentralization policy, as well as the plight of vulnerable groups such as street children, would have to be taken into account in the next country programme. On the issue of basic education, the Regional Director said that it took into account the Education for Life strategy, which included reproductive health and AIDS prevention and treatment. In addition, UNICEF was working with donors to develop new strategies for the education sector. Regarding female circumcision, she said that it was integrated in the education and health programmes in many of the

countries in the region, with appreciable success, especially in Burkina Faso. However, no data were available on the Niger.

Americas and the Caribbean

37. There were no country notes from the Americas and Caribbean region submitted at the present session. However, the Acting Regional Director highlighted a number of events that had implications for UNICEF programming in the region into the next decade, in particular the devastation wreaked by Hurricane Mitch, which caused more than 10,000 deaths, the destruction of social and economic infrastructure, and the loss of livelihoods of millions of people, as well as other natural disasters; and the continued impact of the economic downturn of the second half of 1998, with its increased unemployment, austerity and reduced social spending. Therefore, UNICEF and the Governments of the region needed to address the issue of vulnerability, especially of the poor. He also said that the capacity for emergency preparedness and response, including for potential economic crises, needed to be strengthened. There were no comments from delegations on the presentation.

East Asia and the Pacific

38. There were no country notes from the East Asia and Pacific region submitted at the present session. However, the Regional Director reported on highlights and key events in the region, including the Fourth Ministerial Consultation for East Asia and the Pacific Region, held in November last year, which had offered opportunities for countries to still achieve the World Summit for Children goals by 2000. He noted the progress in various areas as well as the disparities that remained between and within countries. There had been some retrogression in the region, and the spread of HIV/AIDS had a profound negative impact on the lives of millions.

39. One delegation called the presentation informative and encouraging. She also concurred with the remarks that the Bangkok Declaration and Action Agenda reaffirmed the highest political commitment of Governments for achieving the goals of child survival, development, protection and participation and implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child. At the end of the discussion, the Regional Director highly commended the results of the Bangkok Ministerial Consultation, and both he and the Executive Director recommended the report of the Consultation to the Board.

South Asia

40. There were no country notes from the South Asia submitted at the present session. The Regional Director highlighted the relevant key issues and noted the significant challenges posed by the enormous child population of 542 million. He reported on the region's commitment to its children through ratification of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, the further commitment expressed at the 1996 South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) conference, and the foreseeable endorsement of a SAARC Convention later in 1999 on Preventing and Combating Trafficking of Women and Children for prostitution. While noting some of the region's achievements, he said that children were still faced with severe challenges and identified the priority actions to address them.

41. The Regional Director was commended for his informative report. One delegation expressed his Government's appreciation for UNICEF assistance in response to the flood emergency in his country. He felt that while improving primary basic education was a good initiative, it required a more structured programme. Another delegation reiterated the importance given in the SAARC Declaration to issues such as primary education for girls, malnutrition of young children, gender mainstreaming and iodine deficiency disorders. She particularly mentioned the efforts of establishing a national nutrition surveillance system in her country. The Regional Director expressed appreciation for the comments on primary education and the girl child.

Middle East and North Africa

42. The country note for the Islamic Republic of Iran (E/ICEF/1999/P/L.11) was presented by the Regional Director for the Middle East and North Africa. He said that the country programme strategy built on the country's successes and sought to address the unresolved issues influencing the well-being of the Iranian child. Strong political commitment had resulted in the achievement of all the year 2000 goals, with the exception of reducing malnutrition by one half. Issues once considered too sensitive were openly debated, and the next country programme had been designed through innovative participatory mechanisms and a process of transparency.

43. One speaker informed delegations that its embassy in Tehran had communicated positive comments on its participation in the country note development process for the Islamic Republic of Iran and commended UNICEF for its role. He further assured Board members that the priorities as described in the country note were also those of the Government and of development partners in the country. Another speaker commended the excellent collaboration in the country note development process. He added that his Government was dedicated to the eradication of disparities and looked forward to expanded collaboration with UNICEF to address the remaining challenges. The Regional Director thanked the delegations for their very supportive and encouraging remarks.

Central and Eastern Europe, the Commonwealth of Independent States and the Baltic States

44. The Regional Director for Central and Eastern Europe, the Commonwealth of Independent States and the Baltic States introduced the country notes for Azerbaijan, Armenia, Romania, and the Central Asian republics and Kazakhstan (E/ICEF/1999/P/L.12-E/ICEF/1999/P/L.15, respectively). He spoke about the contracted social safety nets, resulting in immense pressure on family coping capacities. He also noted that there was inadequate support for basic social services for children and women owing to the fall in government revenues. As a result, attention would be focused on the problems of children in institutions, children with disabilities and children in conflict with the law. UNICEF would also give special attention to emerging challenges such as sexually transmitted diseases (STDs), HIV/AIDS and drug abuse.

45. The country notes generally were judged to be of high quality. A speaker addressed the need for interaction with Governments and other partners and the importance of building on positive achievements of the past, while at the same time reforming institutes working for the protection of children and women. Another delegation remarked that there was little reference in the country notes to the emerging problem of child labour. The speaker added that UNICEF had an opportunity to use advocacy and integrated approaches at an early stage to prevent the problem from increasing, and wanted to know whether UNICEF had concrete plans to meet this challenge. In response, the Regional Director said that UNICEF should examine the issue of child labour in a larger context in order to identify possible solutions.

46. UNICEF was commended on the programme outlined for Armenia, which targeted areas of greatest need and noted the need to ensure that sufficient resources were allocated. The delegation added that indicators of programme should be developed to help focus activities. Another delegation expressed appreciation for the valuable cooperation and assistance of UNICEF to vulnerable groups. The representative of UNAIDS said that increases in the incidence of STDs, drug use and HIV infections had been observed in the country.

47. Numerous delegations commented on the Azerbaijan country note. A delegation reported that the serious deterioration of the situation of women and children had substantially limited the potential of the national Government to address the new challenges, especially those in the areas of health and education. In that connection, the UNAIDS representative added that, as in Armenia, increases in STDs, drug use and HIV infections had also been observed in Azerbaijan. The need for UNICEF support in the development of a national

policy for safe motherhood and improved obstetric care was also stressed. Moreover, the country still continued to face the problem of 1 million refugees and internally displaced persons, including children in need of special protection living in settlements. Along with the support of the international community, the Government had achieved some results in the economic reform process, adopting a law on the rights of the child.

48. While acknowledging the good cooperation in education for health workers, the lack of resources in the education system was noted by a delegation. The same delegation felt that the decrease in school attendance could lead to a new challenge of child labour. Another speaker supported the introduction of new activities such as active learning methods, curriculum development, the expanded psychosocial rehabilitation of children affected by armed conflict, etc. One delegation stressed the need to continue service delivery and capacity-building activities, while another speaker urged UNICEF to support subnational capacities to promote networking. A delegation stressed the importance of involving all interested partners, including NGOs, local authorities, United Nations agencies, the Government and individuals, to achieve concrete results for the benefit of children and women. One speaker commented on the need for impact indicators.

49. A number of delegations fully supported the approaches and strategies proposed in the Romania country note. One of the speakers requested a more detailed review of the programme at the next stage and expressed a particular interest in how the UNICEF programme was coordinated with the work of other donors; obtaining more details on programmes for children and women and on the immunization programme, including the Government's own programme to include hepatitis B as one of the antigens in its national efforts; the "models of excellence" approach to child welfare; and understanding the programme objectives and impact indicators.

50. Several delegations welcomed the further reassurance that the rights-based approach to programming was reflected in the activities in the country note, especially in promoting access to health education and recreational services for marginalized and vulnerable children in particular. Therefore, greater emphasis needed to be placed on capacity-building and the participation of children. The UNAIDS representative suggested that UNICEF might also consider HIV/AIDS within the context of children with special needs, and drew attention to the issue of children with AIDS contained in the Romania CCA.

51. One delegation mentioned the importance of strengthening the linkages between the UNICEF country programme process and other important programme tools such as UNDAF, which would contribute to the harmonization of United Nations assistance at the country level and enable UNICEF to promote the centrality of children's rights among the United Nations priorities for assistance. UNICEF had played a key role in building partnerships among national actors and had helped to shape social reforms of the Government. However, as one speaker noted, it was not clear from the country note that the UNICEF strategy reflected the concern about decentralization, i.e. that it would not add to existing levels of social exclusion for children or their marginalization from the policy-making process. It was suggested that paragraph 15 of the country note should have taken into account the needs of pregnant women, particularly in rural areas which lacked doctors and where cultural norms mitigated against birth spacing.

52. One speaker expressed general support for the proposed programme for the Central Asian republics and Kazakhstan. Given the limited resources, UNICEF was urged to focus more narrowly on areas in which it had a comparative advantage, such as immunization, anaemia prevention and breastfeeding promotion. The same speaker also noted the need to increase coordination between UNICEF and donors. Several delegations commented that the section on the situation of children and women should have included a reference to the rising incidence of tuberculosis and its impact. A speaker also suggested that the same section would have benefited from a note explaining the effect of increased poverty on reducing the access of poor people, especially children and women, to health services.

53. Despite the negative impact of the transition on the provision of basic services to children in the areas of health and education in Kazakhstan, one speaker reported that progress had been made in some areas such as the elimination of polio and anaemia prevention. The speaker also addressed some of the emerging new problems such as increases in hepatitis, tuberculosis, maternal mortality and HIV/AIDS. The UNAIDS representative was encouraged that UNICEF was integrating HIV/AIDS issues and the dangers of drug abuse into the school health education package in Kazakhstan. Appreciation was expressed for UNICEF cooperation in helping to rehabilitate the population affected by the consequences of the nuclear testing in Semipalatinsk.

54. A speaker was pleased to note that the proposed programme for Kyrgyzstan was used as a model for countries in the transition stage. UNICEF was urged to cooperate closely with UNESCO in preparation for the international decade for culture and non-violence and peace. The same speaker also expressed an interest in expanding initiatives for vaccine self-sufficiency.

55. Concerns were raised by one delegation about the Chernobyl accident and the recent Transcarpathian floods. He expressed appreciation to UNICEF for its assistance to handicapped children and its support to programmes for children with special needs. He also raised the issue of UNICEF support in 1999 for a programme for the desalinization of the drinking water supply as a result of the Chernobyl accident. The Executive Board was requested to consider the possibility of increasing general resources funding for vaccination programmes for the victims of the accident. Acknowledging that the environmental catastrophe at Chernobyl would continue to affect several countries in the region, the Regional Director said that UNICEF would continue to work with the affected communities to help them strengthen their coping capacities.

56. Since many of the interventions on the specific country notes dealt with similar issues and concerns, the Regional Director's responses could also apply to most of the countries. He acknowledged the need for both UNICEF and the countries of the region to focus on the newly emerging issues facing young people and adolescents, from STDs to tobacco and drug addiction and HIV/AIDS. He advised that the CPRs would clearly reflect the rights-based approach, the issues of hepatitis B and tuberculosis, and collaboration and coordination with bilateral and other international organizations. He concurred with several of the speakers that it was necessary to ensure that the good work done on the immunization programmes was not lost. He stressed the importance of working in a decentralized way in the region in order to help countries and NGOs focus on the most vulnerable groups. In response to comments made by the representative of UNAIDS, the Regional Director agreed that UNICEF and UNAIDS were strong partners in the region and acknowledged the importance of dealing with AIDS before it reached a pandemic level, helping young people to have a better understanding of HIV/AIDS and how to protect themselves. They also needed to have access to services that were friendly and open.

Europe

57. The Regional Director for Europe said that in 1999, the Office for Europe would have two complementary objectives: to continue to mobilize the international community to ensure that children's rights were protected and promoted all over the world, with the support of the National Committees for UNICEF; and to work with national and regional organizations - governmental and non-governmental - to identify and highlight children's issues that needed increased attention within the European community. Child rights issues were receiving increased attention in Europe, and the Regional Director reported on several initiatives.

58. He said that UNICEF was counting on the National Committees to meet their objectives in the region. However, the situation had become more difficult for the Committees over the last few years; competition was tougher and, in many countries, a large percentage of the population had less money to give. At the same time, with the downward trend in ODA, UNICEF looked to private contributions to help fill the gap. In the face of those challenges, the

Regional Office and PSD were working with the National Committees to develop a new planning process aimed at helping the latter to maximize their potential. A set of key performance indicators had been developed with seven pilot Committees, which would be used to measure the effectiveness of each Committee's fund-raising and sales activities, as well as to monitor their overall financial health, their managerial strength, their leadership and visibility, and their capacity to innovate. Those indicators would be used as tools for a joint, in-depth review of past performance and the development of a three-year plan for each Committee. Simultaneously, key performance indicators were being developed to measure how well UNICEF provided the required inputs from its side.

E. Summary of mid-term reviews and major evaluations of country programmes

59. The Director, Programme Division, provided an overview of the 23 MTRs being presented to the Executive Board, highlighting the MTR process, programme priorities, achievements, concerns and the challenges ahead. He said that the reports showed a close collaboration among UNICEF, Government and other partners; that the review preparations and meetings were government led; and that the Executive Board comments on previous MTRs and organizational guidelines had strengthened the process. Three major concerns were raised by the Director in his presentation: HIV/AIDS; malnutrition; and poverty. He also identified the incorporation of the 1998-2000 programme priorities, rights-based programming approaches and United Nations reforms into existing and future programmes as among the main challenges facing the 23 countries. There were no comments from delegations on the Director's presentation.

60. In her introduction to the major evaluations conducted in 1998, the Director of the Evaluation, Policy and Planning Division highlighted two major dimensions: (a) the clear emphasis on strengthening UNICEF evaluation capacity; and (b) the increasing visibility of and focus on children's and women's rights. She also reviewed the main areas of achievement with regard to evaluation capacity. She further noted that the reports echoed the human rights approach of UNICEF. Children in war, with reference to the role of teachers and child caregivers in providing psychosocial support to traumatized children, and the contribution of evaluation work in the fulfilment of a child's right to education were two major themes highlighted in the report. There was no comments from delegations on the Director's presentation.

Eastern and Southern Africa

61. The Regional Director for Eastern and Southern Africa introduced the report (E/ICEF/1999/P/L.1). He highlighted the general conclusions and lessons learned from the 1998 MTRs which took place in Eritrea, Madagascar, Mauritius, Swaziland and Uganda, and gave an overview of the situation in the region. He also reported that major evaluations undertaken in 1998 and said that more work was planned to adopt international programme evaluation standards, strengthen institutional capacities and the focus on children's rights, train UNICEF staff and promote networking among professionals.

62. One speaker commended on the quality of the MTRs and evaluations, noting that they provided delegations with a way of following up on the results of decisions made by the Board three to five years ago, including the results of the multi-donor evaluation. The secretariat replied that one could learn more from successes than from failures, which was the reason UNICEF focused on lessons learned. Several speakers intervened to emphasize that evaluations also needed to focus on what did not work in order to improve programmes.

63. Regarding the Eritrea MTR, one speaker drew attention to paragraph 10 of the report which stated that two thirds of available resources were channelled towards service delivery, with the balance planned for capacity-building and empowerment. The report said all three were strategies and should not be singled out and measured separately. The secretariat acknowledged that the distinction in the report was not a useful one, noting also that empowerment was not a strategy, but that strategies could be more or less empowering.

64. Several delegations endorsed the recommendation to strengthen the basic education and HIV/AIDS components of the programme for Swaziland. One speaker enquired about whether the political and economic situation had deteriorated to such an extent that it affected the provision of services.

65. Another delegation stated its support for the findings of the Madagascar MTR and expressed appreciation for the efforts to improve formal education through the use of programme contracts between teachers, parents and education authorities. The same delegation asked whether other countries in the region were trying this approach. The delegation also queried the total number of health centres actually being supported by UNICEF as part of the Bamako Initiative compared to the number assisted by other agencies. He urged UNICEF to be more balanced in the presentation of its contributions in the health sector and to acknowledge more openly support from others towards shared objectives. Citing the shortfall in funding for the period 1996-1997, the delegation called for more realistic programming. While confirming that UNICEF tried to be as realistic as possible, the Regional Director explained the reasons for the shortfall in funding, agreeing that they should have been stated more clearly.

66. Another speaker agreed with the findings of the Mauritius MTR and the proposed strategy for transition of the country programme. The same speaker, however, expressed concern about the high operational costs related to such a small country programme, drawing attention to the number of staff in relation to available resources. The Regional Director replied that the country programme focused on advocacy, not service delivery, and that it would eventually be phased out.

67. One delegation wished to know to what extent the lessons learned from the evaluation of the psychosocial programme had shed light on the comparative strengths of community-based and more traditional approaches. The numbers of affected children were so great that a community-based approach seemed to be the only feasible option. The Regional Director replied that it was important to recognize the large numbers of children who required trauma recovery assistance and that other regular techniques were inappropriate.

West and Central Africa

68. The Regional Director for West and Central Africa presented the report (E/ICEF/1999/P/L.2). She said that the MTRs for the three countries concerned, namely Burkina Faso, Chad and Ghana, revealed that there could be confusion between the specific objectives of the country programme of cooperation and the national development objectives of the host Government. Implementation had been hampered by the inability of Governments to meet their commitments in certain critical areas, and a lack of intersectoral coordination and geographical focus in the field. Moreover, resource mobilization efforts had fallen short of expected results. Those findings had been used to reorient the programmes in the three countries.

69. Several delegations commented positively on the quality of the report, noting its open and frank tone and that it was more critical than the report from the Eastern and Southern Africa region. One speaker cautioned that UNICEF activities in the region needed to be balanced between emergency interventions and long-term development activities. The same speaker called on UNICEF to concentrate on helping countries to achieve the World Summit for Children goals, while urging donor countries to re-commit to the goals. With regard to evaluations, a delegation said that UNICEF should remain a learning organization through its evaluation activities.

70. Several delegations noted that the results of the MTRs often led to adjustments in the original programme objectives. Concern was expressed that the programming process currently being used might not be sufficiently realistic in view of the need for so many adjustments during the MTRs. The same delegations asked whether or not it was realistic to continue programming based on supplementary funds that were not in hand. One speaker expressed concern about the long-term impact of this situation on the credibility of the organization.

71. A speaker said that the Burkina Faso MTR had identified two major constraints that needed to be addressed thoroughly in the future: the slow process in liquidating cash advances; and the difficulty encountered in raising supplementary funds. The same delegation sought clarification on the issue of unliquidated cash advances to Governments which slowed programme implementation during 1996-1997, and raised the question of the realism of the current programming process since the MTR for Burkina Faso also proposed significant adjustment of objectives and strategies. In that connection, the delegation wondered whether the target groups and zones of intervention had been properly identified in the original programming exercise.

72. Regarding the Chad MTR, the same speaker was impressed with the many achievements of the UNICEF programme in view of the limited national institutional capacity. Another delegation suggested establishing working relationships with civil society in countries where national institutional capacities were limited, stating that it was encouraging to note that the MTR processes had led to necessary adjustments in UNICEF programmes to reflect the changing situation in the field.

73. The Regional Director thanked delegations for their constructive comments, stressing that despite constraints, remarkable progress had been with regard to ensuring the rights of children and women in all three countries.

Americas and the Caribbean

74. In his presentation of the report on the Americas and the Caribbean (E/ICEF/1999/P/L.3), the Acting Regional Director highlighted the important role that country programme activities played in influencing policies in the region and the interest that Governments showed in programme planning and review, including the major role they played in the MTR exercises. The four MTRs carried out in 1998 for Honduras, Mexico, Peru and Brazil noted satisfactory progress, but with shortfalls in maternal mortality and nutrition. The region's ongoing efforts at strengthening monitoring and evaluation were also highlighted.

75. Two delegations noted the very consultative process that had characterized the Peru and Honduras MTRs. With regard to Peru, a donor delegation commended UNICEF for the content of the MTR which covered progress made and challenges remaining, as well as the process and the work of UNICEF in the country in general. The same speaker also noted the excellent collaboration with UNICEF in Peru, urging that such partnerships with donors be promoted in other countries.

76. One delegation noted the progress reported in the Mexico MTR in meeting the World Summit for Children goals and applauded UNICEF for recognizing the need to define more precisely objectives for each of the goals and how they would be achieved. However, the delegation also expressed concern at the proposed shift in UNICEF support at this critical juncture from the provision of basic services and financial cooperation to technical assistance for rights-based programming. Noting that the review would result in changes in staffing, the delegation urged that technical staffing be maintained in Mexico as well as in other countries as they made the final push towards the end of decade goals. In responding to those concerns, the Acting Regional Director noted that the countries in the region were very committed to fulfilling the World Summit goals, and UNICEF would continue to support their achievement within a rights-based approach. He reassured delegations that any staffing changes would be made very judiciously and would not impact negatively on the commitment to achieving the World Summit goals. As one of the initiators of the World Summit for Children, one delegation highlighted the importance of UNICEF work in supporting national efforts to meet the goals, and noted some of the significant activities carried out during 1998 to meet specific challenges.

77. One delegation enquired about the prospects for expanding the Special Adjustment Facility for Latin America and the Caribbean in the region. The Acting Regional Director explained that the results of the evaluation had been very encouraging and had shown that the projects had contributed to changes in

social and public policies. He added that the initiatives had now been mainstreamed into regular programmes in other countries in the region.

East Asia and the Pacific

78. In presenting the report for East Asia and the Pacific (E/ICEF/1999/P/L.4), the Regional Director noted that the MTRs had included the five largest programmes in the region, i.e. Cambodia, China, Indonesia, Myanmar and Viet Nam. While the overall assessment of the utility of MTRs had been unquestionably positive, the Regional Director reported that the experience had raised some issues for the future, such as the sometimes high cost in terms of time and resources. Although the concept of the MTR was primarily to assess experience in the first half of the programme cycle, and to make appropriate adjustments as required, he said that increasingly, changes in the country environment were taking place at such a rapid pace that the MTRs were becoming the launching pad for new country programmes, even as the existing ones were being modified.

79. Referring to the remarks that the MTR process could become too elaborate and consume inordinate amounts of time and human resources, another speaker wondered how this could be improved. She also asked how the MTR could be used as a launching pad for the new programme when the situation was changing so rapidly and what were the lessons learned in this regard.

80. One delegation said that the economic crisis had threatened the social welfare and development of her country and expressed appreciation for the quick response of UNICEF, which was further reinforced in the MTR. She agreed that there was a need for renewed efforts in helping school drop-outs as education was vital to child development. It was equally important to help 12,000 street children, and she informed the Board of her Government's efforts in this area.

81. Appreciation was expressed for UNICEF support towards the achievement of the year 2000 goals in China. One speaker said that while the MTR had reaffirmed achievements made so far, it had also helped to identify the challenges and strategies to tackle them. Another delegation felt that the education programme could serve as a model for other countries in the region. He felt that the verticality of the government structure posed a constraint to programme implementation and wanted to know how this would be resolved. The Regional Director reported that good progress had been made and was confident that the difficulties of verticality would be overcome. He also reported progress in programmes to combat girl trafficking and was satisfied with the collaboration with the Ministry of Public Security, a rare experience for UNICEF to work with a government institute of this nature.

82. One delegation commended the results of the Indonesia MTR and expressed satisfaction with the collaboration between the UNICEF country team and her embassy in Jakarta. She also called for increased donor coordination in post-crisis responses. Another speaker expressed support for UNICEF collaboration with the World Bank on basic education to enable the re-entry of drop-outs. The Regional Director explained the revised strategies, such as concentrating on fewer issues, providing direct services, increasing collaboration with NGOs, building social capital and collaborating with subnational levels. He reaffirmed UNICEF efforts, in close collaboration with all donors, and referred to cooperation with the World Bank, in which the Bank was focusing on re-entry, while UNICEF was focusing on advocacy and social mobilization.

83. A speaker referred to the success of border collaboration on National Immunization Days between Myanmar and China which promoted cost-effectiveness and enquired whether such collaboration could be expanded. The Regional Director provided additional information on the Mekong HIV/AIDS programme, which involved six countries, including Myanmar.

84. Concerning the Viet Nam MTR, one speaker supported the strategy in the water and sanitation sector to avoid spreading activities too thinly. He also reported on the useful collaboration between UNICEF and his embassy in the same

area as well as in child protection. A delegation wondered if the demand-driven approach would actually run counter to the UNICEF policy to focus on the poor. The Regional Director replied that experience had shown that when people participated, it gave them a sense of ownership and desire for sustainability. This would not run counter to the UNICEF policy to support the poor.

South Asia

85. The Regional Director for South Asia described the major findings of the MTRs conducted in Afghanistan and Bangladesh, as well as the regional evaluations, as contained in document E/ICEF/1999/P/L.5. He also reported that UNICEF had been an active partner in the development of UNDAF for Afghanistan.

86. Delegations thanked the Regional Director for his excellent summary of the findings of the MTRs and evaluations. A speaker spoke of her country's efforts in providing humanitarian assistance to Afghanistan through both bilateral and multilateral channels. She emphasized the need for the next UNICEF programme to support girls who had been deprived of educational opportunities.

87. Concerning Bangladesh, one delegation wanted to learn more about progress in areas that were not reported on, such as the hard-to-reach programme. He also raised concerns about the inadequate flow of resources and mentioned in particular that the literacy programmes required further strengthening and support. He reiterated the need for all to collaborate in finding solutions to the problem of arsenic contamination in his country. With regard to aid flows, the Regional Director reported that Bangladesh was less dependent than other countries, and had experienced many successes. Concerning arsenic contamination, he reported that UNICEF was currently supporting a comprehensive package of measures to address the issue and related health problems in collaboration with national counterparts and international partners, including the World Bank, WHO, and Asian and global arsenic networks.

88. The fruitful collaboration between UNICEF and her agency in the areas of polio eradication and universal salt iodization in Bangladesh was commended by a speaker. She also welcomed the signing of a three-party memorandum of understanding on the elimination of child labour in the garment industry. She mentioned UNICEF/WHO/United States Agency for International Development (USAID) collaboration in the areas of health and nutrition as well as USAID support for the 1998 flood relief work. While expressing support for the MTR, one delegation mentioned a water/sanitation evaluation sponsored by the Danish International Development Agency that would be finalized shortly.

Middle East and North Africa

89. The Regional Director for the Middle East and North Africa introduced the report (E/ICEF/1999/P/L.6). The MTRs, he said, had marked a very important juncture in programming in both Egypt and the Syrian Arab Republic, and described the results. He informed members that in 1998, a total of 43 studies and 25 evaluations were conducted in the region.

90. UNICEF was commended for the quality of the report by several speakers. One speaker said that it was objective, comprehensive and very analytical, and that it reflected the shift to a child rights approach. She commended UNICEF for its commitment to gender and the eradication of disparities as well as for its ability to raise funds to counterbalance the reduction in general resources. The same speaker applauded the HIV/AIDS initiative in Egypt and urged the organization to take the lead in the region on innovative ways to break the silence on this issue. She further commended UNICEF and the regional Goodwill Ambassador for successful awareness promotion activities. Another delegation reaffirmed his Government's commitment to the Convention on the Rights of the Child and to full equality among all children. In addressing his Government's financial contributions to UNICEF programmes, he assured the Board that it should redouble its efforts, especially in the areas of health and education.

91. One delegation expressed concern that the report did not provide a picture of the deplorable situation faced by Iraqi children, and he requested UNICEF to undertake a study of the real situation of children and to share the results with members of the Board. In response, the Regional Director clarified that no MTR or major evaluations took place in Iraq in 1998 and that the Iraq country programme had been discussed at the September 1998 session of the Board.

Central and Eastern Europe, the Commonwealth of Independent States and the Baltic States

92. In presenting the report (E/ICEF/1999/P/L.7), the Regional Director for Central and Eastern Europe, the Commonwealth of Independent States and the Baltic States said that the MTRs of the country programmes of Albania, Georgia and Turkey had led to the identification of new areas requiring attention, such as children living on the street, domestic violence and HIV/AIDS. They reflected a focus on children's rights and, ultimately, new programme directions. The MTRs reaffirmed that greater emphasis should be placed on the role of primary care providers, families and communities in child development and protection, as institutional solutions in many places were no longer viable. They also identified a need for increased intersectorality and the convergence of services. The importance of a capacity-building strategy and of the use of models of excellence to formulate successful programme approaches was very clearly reflected in all three reviews. He said that UNICEF would continue efforts aimed at the extensive capacity-building of both government institutions and NGOs, establishing sound networking mechanisms and applied research. There were no comments from delegations on the Regional Director's presentation.

F. Progress in implementing the biennial support budget for 1998-1999

93. The UNICEF Comptroller made a brief introductory statement on the "Report on progress in implementing the biennial support budget for 1998-1999" (E/ICEF/1999/AB/L.1), which was prepared in response to Executive Board decision 1998/2 (E/ICEF/1998/6/Rev.1). In that decision, the Executive Director was requested to ensure that the current ratio of management and administration and programme support costs to programme resources would be contained. The Board also requested UNICEF to report on progress in implementing the budget, taking into account the MTP, levels of general resources, costs and income, and the effect of currency fluctuations and implications for human resources.

94. The Comptroller explained that the report was prepared on the basis of data available covering the first eight months of biennium. Nevertheless, as illustrated in the report and confirmed by early estimates for the first 12 months of the biennium, UNICEF was well on track with respect to income projections. It was possible that total income might exceed the MTP projections for 1998. On the expenditure side, UNICEF had experienced early savings in the support budget, but it was too early to generalize these savings for the entire biennium. Therefore, as indicated in the report, UNICEF did not expect any increase in the proportion of support costs to programme resources, and did not see any reason to recommend any changes to the biennium budget as approved by the Board.

95. One delegation expressed appreciation for the secretariat's efforts in preparing the support budget and welcomed the principle that cost increases must be absorbed within the approved budget. The same speaker endorsed the conclusions in section VI of the report. (See the annex, decision 1999/3, for the text of the decision adopted by the Executive Board.)

G. Financial matters

96. Under this agenda item, which was introduced by the Deputy Executive Director, the Executive Board reviewed the following reports:

(a) "UNICEF financial report and audited financial statements for the biennium ended 31 December 1997 and report of the Board of Auditors" (A/53/5/Add.2);

(b) "Report to the United Nations Board of Auditors and the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions" (E/ICEF/1998/AB/L.9).

97. This agenda item had been deferred from the second regular session of 1998 to allow the Executive Board to receive the report of the Board of Auditors. The Board would also benefit from receiving the report of the Advisory Committee on the financial reports and audited financial statements, and reports of the Board of Auditors (A/53/513), which the Deputy Executive Director brought to the Board's attention, as well as from the Fifth Committee's deliberations and resolutions on this subject. The issues detailed below were raised by two delegations.

98. The timing of the Board of Auditor reports and the report of the Advisory Committee coming to the Executive Board for discussion was a situation that they would not want to see repeated, if possible. Therefore, it was suggested that the secretariat work with the Advisory Committee towards resolving the timing issue. The Deputy Executive Director replied that it was outside the secretariat's control as to when the Board of Auditor and Advisory Committee release their reports. However, UNICEF would do the utmost to ensure that the accounts were submitted on time, which they have been, although the workload of both the Board of Auditors and Advisory Committee were heavy and the timing of the Board session made the situation somewhat complicated.

99. It was suggested that the approval process be changed so that the Executive Board would approve the Board of Auditor's report with the copy provided to the General Assembly for information. The UNICEF Executive Board was accountable for approving the budget policy and strategic direction of UNICEF and, therefore, was best placed to approve the Board of Auditor's report. Although the process was the reverse for all other funds and programmes, the delegation was exploring the possibility of changing that process. The Deputy Executive Director said that it was her understanding that this issue might be brought before the General Assembly at its next session, so the delegation might wish to take this matter up at that time.

100. A delegation suggested that UNICEF internal control standards be strengthened and encouraged that these be patterned after the International Organization of Supreme Audit Institution for internal control standards. It was the delegation's belief that adopting these standards would be a progressive move for UNICEF and would help in the efforts of more organizations accepting these guidelines, or at least these audit principles.

101. The delegation further suggested that UNICEF strongly consider introducing the practice of results-based auditing which would focus on results that were to be obtained in addition to making observations on the adherence to existing procedures. Observations could be made as to which processes and procedures might well be re-examined, if they were no longer instrumental in the achievement of the results, but could be obstacles. Or, in some way, they could be revised to further improve the achievement of results. The Deputy Executive Director noted those two points pertaining to the audit which would be shared with the UNICEF Director of Internal Audit, who was likewise looking into these issues. On results-based auditing, the Deputy Executive Director referred to the experience cited by the Regional Director for the Middle East and North Africa on the outcome of programme audits conducted in the region and which, in addition to the MTR, changed some of the programmes for the future.

102. The issue of accounting of expenditures, specifically with regard to cash assistance to Governments, which was charged directly to expenditures and, therefore, obscured the clarity of accounting, was raised. The speaker wanted to know what was being contemplated in this area. Another problem, which they also found in UNDP, was the issue of justifying advances paid to Governments. This was an ongoing concern of the auditors. On the first point, the Deputy Executive Director confirmed that a review was being undertaken to ensure that the provisions of the UNICEF Financial Regulations and Rules were consistent with the organization's accounting treatment of cash assistance to Governments. The outcome of the review would be shared with the Advisory Committee and presented

to the Executive Board at its September session. The Deputy Executive Director further clarified that because UNDP and UNICEF operated differently, their operations were not quite comparable. UNDP was an executing agency, while UNICEF cooperated with partners based on agreed plans of actions between UNICEF and the Government. Cash assistance transferred to UNICEF partners to support programmes of cooperation passed ownership to them upon payment. For that reason, it was neither an advance nor a national execution in the way UNDP operated. However, the secretariat was ensuring that its policies and procedures were consistent with its practices.

103. On the subject of accounting of contributions-in-kind, a delegation felt that the present treatment had the effect of underestimating income. The Deputy Executive Director confirmed that contributions in-kind were being reviewed internally as to accounting treatment. However, it was difficult to put a value on some of the commodities donated to UNICEF.

104. One speaker requested clarification of the mention in the auditor's report of a deficit which stemmed from the sizeable deficit from the expected income for emergency relief and programmes from additional incomes. It was the understanding of the delegation that when a programme was funded from additional income, it could not begin until the totality of the income was effected. In that case, there could only be a deficit in operations funded in this manner if the costs were initially underestimated. The Deputy Executive Director explained that there appeared to be a deficit when a contribution was received at the end of a year and the bulk of the expenditures were incurred in the succeeding years. UNICEF recorded income the year it was received, and it was gradually expended in succeeding years. Therefore, in the years that the expenditures were incurred, there appeared to be a deficit in income. This situation could also be true if income was received very late in one biennium, and expenditures were incurred in the next biennium. UNICEF would then have the income in one biennium and the expenditures in the other. Another point referred to by the auditors was that UNICEF had not received as much funding as estimated for general resources, supplementary and emergency funding. There had been much less income in the biennium 1996-1997 when there were not as many emergency appeals made as in the previous bienniums.

105. There were also some questions on the bidding procedures for consultants: what was the current regulation with regard to bidding procedures for consultants; was there a threshold beyond which tendering was required; what was the procedure when the person responsible for the contract did not respect the rules of the organization; and should sanctions be imposed when the rules of the organization were not complied with. The Deputy Executive Director confirmed that steps had been taken to strengthen the guidelines. While there were no requirements for regular bidding, there should be a selection process on a number of candidates which should be documented. For institutions, UNICEF followed the normal bidding process. She said that UNICEF had strengthened its internal control for the employment of individual consultants. Reporting was required on a quarterly basis from every UNICEF office. If these new guidelines were not followed, the authority to issue contracts would be withdrawn. Compliance with the new guidelines would be part of the performance evaluation report for staff who had authority to issue contracts. (See the annex, decision 1999/4, for the text of the decision adopted by the Executive Board.)

106. With regard to the issue of the capital reserve fund that was highlighted by the external auditors, as referred to in paragraphs 15-17 of document E/ICEF/1998/AB/L.9, the Board agreed that in approving the establishment of a reserve fund for field office accommodation and staff housing (E/ICEF/1990/13, decision 1990/26), it had never asked to be involved in the approval of specific projects. As had been the case since 1990, the Executive Director would continue to report to the Board on the status of the fund in statement VIII of the biennial report.

H. 1999 UNICEF Maurice Pate Award

107. The Executive Board had before it a recommendation by the Executive Director (E/ICEF/1999/6), which was introduced by the Director, Programme Division. He said that the Bureau had endorsed the Executive Director's recommendation that the 1999 Maurice Pate Award be conferred upon the Tanzanian NGO kuleana, in recognition of its significant and innovative contribution to improving the situation of children in that country and to inspiring other NGOs in the region to bring a child rights perspective to their work. The Executive Board approved the recommendation without comment. (See the annex, decision 1999/5, for the text of the decision adopted by the Executive Board.)

I. Other matters

108. No other matters were raised for discussion.

J. Closing remarks by the Executive Director and the President

109. The Executive Director expressed appreciation to the Executive Board for the broad participation many delegations. The secretariat appreciated the breadth of comments made, especially on the country notes, MTRs and evaluations, which would be especially useful to field offices. The long hours devoted to the resource mobilization strategy demonstrated members' sincere interest in and concern and support for UNICEF. That decision would challenge UNICEF to do the best it could do. She pledged that the secretariat would work hard to meet and even exceed their expectations, although she did not underestimate the challenges ahead. The world was an increasingly complex and violent place, where people were willing to speak about children, but did very little. The resource mobilization strategy also posed special challenges to donors and she hoped that they, in turn, would meet the expectations of UNICEF.

110. The President thanked the secretariat and delegations for their hard work throughout the session. He also expressed appreciation to the members of the Bureau for their support and pledged to continue working with them and the Board throughout the year.

III. JOINT MEETING OF THE EXECUTIVE BOARDS OF UNICEF AND THE UNITED NATIONS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME/UNITED NATIONS POPULATION FUND

A. Major areas of concerted action for 1999

Resource flows, follow-up to international conferences, the resident coordinator system

111. The Administrator, UNDP, stated that he hoped the joint meetings in future would function more as a joint review board for the activities of particular country teams, as it was important for their focus to be on country-level issues. The United Nations was consistently successful in the field of operational activities, including both humanitarian and development-related interventions. He applauded General Assembly resolution 53/192 of 15 December 1998 on the triennial policy review, which he said reflected a profound sense of the reality of work at the country level. In particular, the resolution supported the work of the members of the UNDG at the country level. He was pleased with the guidance provided by the resolution on so many important aspects of operational activities.

112. With regard to the resident coordinator system, he noted that there had been much progress in the past year. As funder and manager of the resident coordinator system, UNDP had worked to strengthen the system and appreciated the support from UNDG partners. A successful competency assessment exercise of 40 resident coordinator candidates had taken place for the first time. Following the competency assessment, the first meeting of the Inter-Agency Advisory Panel had shortlisted candidates for each open resident coordinator position. In real progress towards broadening the base of resident coordinators, 21 out of 130 were now from outside UNDP, as compared with 1993 when there had been only one. Currently, 21 per cent of resident coordinators were women, compared with 10 per cent in 1993.

113. A strengthened resident coordinator system was invaluable in the joint effort to promote coherent and cohesive country-level action by the United Nations as mandated by the Secretary-General, he said. The Consultative Committee on Programme and Operational Questions had produced a second guidance note to the resident coordinator system with regard to the follow-up to global conferences. UNDAF was an ideal tool to ensure country-level follow-up to conferences.

114. The Administrator added that General Assembly resolution 53/192 devoted 10 paragraphs to funding, an issue that was of the highest priority. The steady decline in ODA must be halted. Since 1992, core contributions to UNDP and ODA both had declined by 20 per cent. He noted that the multi-year funding frameworks were under discussion in the Executive Boards.

Monitoring and evaluation, use of common indicators

115. The Executive Director, UNFPA, focused primarily on issues related to monitoring and evaluation, including indicators. She said that monitoring and evaluation were an important part of General Assembly resolution 53/192 on the triennial policy review. The funds and programmes agreed on the importance of reviewing and assessing what was being done in operational activities and documenting the results. They also all recognized the need to be more analytical about successes and weaknesses and to collect lessons learned and feed them back into future programming.

116. She said it was useful to recall a number of points. The funds and programmes were not starting from scratch; they all had long-standing expertise and experience in those areas. Moreover, there was coordination in monitoring and evaluation, especially at the field level, but it had not been well documented. The system-wide Inter-agency Working Group on Evaluation provided a useful forum to exchange technical information on substantive and methodological issues, and the Consultative Committee on Programme and Operational Questions had harmonized monitoring and evaluation procedures in the United Nations

system. The development of the CCA and UNDAF had helped to prepare the ground for significantly improved coordination and collaboration in that area. Also, the UNDG members had reviewed reporting forms to see how they could be simplified; discussed ways to harmonize training of national counterparts in capacity-building and results-based budgeting; and reviewed matters related to national execution and sector-wide approaches.

117. She said that the CCA and UNDAF provided a significant opportunity to strengthen the monitoring and evaluation components of programmes. The CCA established a baseline to measure progress, a database and a list of agreed common indicators. It also required that steps be taken to strengthen the country's capacity to collect, analyse and use data. If the CCAs accomplished even part of that ambitious agenda, they would provide, for the first time, a solid basis to undertake monitoring and evaluation that was planned and agreed by all concerned parties. An overriding concern was to strengthen the longer-term capacity of countries in that area. UNDAF guidelines contained an important component on monitoring and evaluation that called for a monitoring and evaluation plan and foresaw more joint exercises at regular intervals.

118. The Executive Director said it was of utmost importance that the United Nations system agreed on a common set of indicators for a given country. This was possible because of the work that had been done in a number of forums, including the Inter-agency Task Force on Basic Social Services for All (BSSA) and the United Nations Statistical Commission, and in the development of the CCA and UNDAF. The new CCA indicator frameworks took into account the key outcome indicators in previous lists, notably the 15 social sector indicators of the Minimum National Social Data Set and the 11 key development indicators of the BSSA Task Force. In developing the CCA indicator framework, the United Nations had been mindful of the need not to add to countries' reporting burdens, to ensure country ownership of the indicators and to strengthen local statistical capacity.

119. She concluded by noting a number of other issues relating to harmonization of policies and procedures that the UNDG members would address in the months ahead. For example, they would closely monitor progress in harmonizing programming cycles, for which it had provided guidance and instructions to country offices. UNDG members would also be taking a fresh look at the programming procedures of each organization in the context of the implementation of the CCA and UNDAF with a view to streamlining and simplifying them further.

Harmonization of programme cycles, common premises and services, the United Nations Development Assistance Framework and the Common Country Assessment

120. The Executive Director, UNICEF, said that harmonization of programme cycles was key to the introduction and effectiveness of UNDAF and that the heads of the funds and programmes had asked all offices to harmonize their programme cycles by 2003. To date, 39 countries were harmonized and another 49 would soon have agreements to do so. The funds and programmes were also looking at countries where their cycles were off by just one year. In Colombia and Paraguay, for example, where the UNICEF programmes were scheduled to end in 1999, UNICEF would prepare two-year programmes in order to harmonize the cycles with those of the other agencies. Having synchronized programme cycles would both create the necessary preconditions for the successful implementation of UNDAF and improve the complementarity of agencies' programmes. There were still some outstanding issues, however:

(a) The programme cycles of United Nations agencies would have to coincide with government planning periods, although with an increase in "rolling plans" and the wide range of planning cycles, in every case full synchronization might not be possible;

(b) In order to ensure continuing synchronization of cycles, there must be agreement on the length of future programming cycles. That would take into account both government planning cycles and the agencies' own internal, including Board-mandated, processes. The issue was on the work plan of the UNDG agencies in 1999;

(c) There were a number of countries where there were difficult circumstances, such as conflict, or where agencies had multi-country programmes covering different configurations of countries, or where the programme cycles were out of synchronization by more than one year. In these cases, the United Nations country teams had been asked to work with headquarters to prepare a plan of action to move towards harmonization.

121. Concerning common premises, she said that currently there were seven United Nations Houses that had been inaugurated by the Secretary-General, with a further 23 to be designated formally on an appropriate occasion in the coming months. In 14 additional countries, some combination of UNDG members shared premises. The UNDG subgroup on common premises, chaired by UNICEF, would evaluate a further 20 locations each year for the next three years. The extent to which United Nations Houses would be established would depend on the evaluation and the availability of funding.

122. As for common services, she said, with support from key donors, the subgroup had begun to analyse common service practices and would build a database of best practices that country teams would be encouraged to adopt. However, much was happening at the country level. In Honduras, for example, which had a United Nations House, a cooperation agreement had been signed by the agencies that detailed the use and management of common services. In Guatemala, UNICEF estimated that the development of common and shared services had reduced budgeted administration and travel costs. Shared or common services were in place in all countries with a United Nations House, and in many others, including India, the Philippines and Zimbabwe, country teams were developing enhanced means of cooperation.

123. The pilot phase of the UNDAF exercise had been assessed in a number of ways, she said. The UNDG agencies had carried out an internal review which was complemented by a review by an external group of "eminent persons". Individual agencies, including UNICEF, had carried out their own analyses. The pilot phase had culminated in a system-wide consultation held in Princeton, New Jersey, in November 1998. In addition to the need for harmonization of programme cycles, the review highlighted the need to: (a) ensure full government participation and ownership; (b) carry out a thorough CCA and analysis as an essential precondition of UNDAF; and (c) revise the existing provisional guidelines and global support system, emphasizing regional support networks and drawing on the experience of the pilot phase.

124. On the basis of those reviews, UNDG members had agreed on proposals for the expansion of UNDAF. The UNDG subgroup on programme policies, chaired by UNICEF, was charged with the responsibility of drafting the new guidelines for the CCA, UNDAF and the global support system. The initial drafts were completed in December 1998 and circulated to all country teams in the pilot countries and to country teams that had completed the CCA exercise. All UNDG members, including the regional commissions, the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, the World Bank and the specialized agencies, had been asked for their comments. The subgroup aimed to complete the second draft in early February; once they were approved by the UNDG members, the guidelines would be issued to all country teams by early March. While the final roll-out plan could only be determined once it was clear which countries would have completed the CCA process and have harmonized programme cycles, preliminary indications were that some 50 countries should have embarked on the exercise by the end of 2000. All countries were encouraged to start the CCA process, however.

125. There were still a number of issues to be addressed, she said. Adding a CCA and an UNDAF to the individual programme development processes of each fund or programme simply was not feasible. Each agency would review the impact on its process, and for its part, UNICEF would have within the next few months proposals for discussion on how to adopt its programming process to this new

reality. A second issue was how to apply and adapt UNDAF to countries in conflict and how it was linked to the Strategic Framework.

Links between development and humanitarian operations

126. The Deputy Executive Director, WFP, said that one of the reasons that it was difficult to incorporate development initiatives in relief operations was their time-frame, which for an emergency operation typically was a few months. Follow-on phases had to be planned almost simultaneously. During the first phase, it was almost impossible to identify a development possibility, invite potential partners to prepare proposals, engage personnel and place them in the field, build confidence with the local community and start the development work. WFP could assure development partners such as NGOs only very short-term funding and, as a result, it was not always easy to find qualified partners who were prepared to work on this basis.

127. Another difficulty was that staying too long in a pure relief phase could create distortions in economic structures, impede the rebuilding process and delay the emergence of locally-based food supply systems, he said. Thus, it was important to move as soon as possible to a recovery stage by reducing the general distribution of free food while still targeting the most vulnerable. As the overall costs of the operation declined, however, sometimes dramatically, the balance between the programme support costs and the programme deliverables changed. Viewed in those narrow terms, the operation appeared more costly and sometimes it was difficult to convince donors that operations were not becoming less efficient.

128. In 1998, the WFP Executive Board agreed that with few exceptions, a recovery strategy would be prepared within 18 months of the beginning of a relief operation. WFP, however, should begin introducing recovery approaches when the opportunity arose, even prior to the formulation of a recovery strategy. The Board also revised an existing category of programme activities to enable WFP to undertake development activities identified in the recovery strategy, using contributions from either or both the relief and development budget lines of donors. That programme category included a contingency mechanism to respond to possible setbacks, reversals and new emergencies or disasters. The adaptation was now established and had been used in Cambodia, Central America, the Great Lakes region of Africa, Somalia and Iraq.

129. The Executive Board had approved other policies, including continuing to work with partners through such inter-agency mechanisms as the Strategic Framework, the Consolidated Appeals Process and UNDAF; maximizing local inputs and participation; involving women in programme design, implementation and monitoring; strengthening local and national institutions and capacities; reinforcing pockets of stability during crises; engaging with civil society; and helping people to cope with crisis.

Discussion

130. A number of delegations spoke about the significance of the joint meeting itself within the context of United Nations reform, although it was suggested that in future, the joint meetings should focus on fewer topics.

131. Many speakers expressed continued support for UNDAF as a means of strengthening United Nations programmes at the country level through improved coordination and use of resources. CCAs were considered an important, crucial first step in elaborating UNDAF, which was also seen as a means of implementing the programmes of the international conferences. Delegations were encouraged by the progress made to date and by the commitment of the funds and programmes to the exercise, especially to harmonizing programme cycles and simplifying programming procedures. It was suggested that a broader range of partners, including the specialized agencies and the international financial institutions (IFIs), would increase the effectiveness of UNDAF. The need for ownership of the process by programme countries was stressed by many delegations. Speakers were

encouraged by improvements in the resident coordinator system, especially the broadened pool of candidates and the new selection process.

132. A speaker said that there had been a decline in resources for development and that harmonization was a means of reducing duplication and increasing cost-effectiveness through such means as common premises. However, cost-cutting was not an end in itself. What was needed was the implementation of agreed projects in developing countries. Another speaker suggested that the executive heads of the funds and programmes issue a joint statement on resource flows to highlight the importance of the matter. It was also suggested that resident coordinators seek resources in programme countries through strategic alliances. The Executive Director, UNFPA, agreed that there was a need for a joint statement on resource mobilization but suggested that it specify what those resources could accomplish. The Administrator, UNDP, also supported the idea of a joint statement on resource flows.

133. On UNDAF, delegations asked about the possibility of joint programming and reporting; about what programming instruments could be eliminated and whether there were as yet ideas about how simplified programming procedures would work. It was also asked if the funds and programmes were contemplating reporting on the activities of Governments and of multilateral and bilateral donors. Questions were raised about the involvement of the World Bank in the UNDAF exercise. Some speakers raised questions about CCAs, with one asking if they could be made available to other development partners. The delegation of one of the UNDAF pilot countries said that the CCA would enhance the development partnership between the United Nations agencies, programme countries and the Bretton Woods institutions, in line with the need for national execution and ownership of the process.

134. The Administrator, UNDP, said that at the country level, it could be a long time before the individuality of funds and programmes was lost. However, the programming process did have to be simplified. As an example, UNDP was prepared to drop its advisory note in any country where UNDAF was in place. The UNDG subgroups on programme policies and operation were exploring ways of simplifying procedures and harmonization. At the country level, the United Nations family needed coordination that would include the funds and programmes and the specialized agencies, allowing them to merge their modest resources in joint, parallel strategies that supported the country's agenda while providing a "big table" for the Bretton Woods institutions and the IFIs. The resident coordinator system provided a platform for coordination at the country level. Collaborative programming had been successful in certain instances, as in Burundi, but in general, problems remained owing to the obligation of separate reporting arrangements.

135. The Executive Director, UNFPA, said that there was a strong commitment to UNDAF, but it was important to maintain the identities of the funds and programmes, which were needed for fund-raising. There were many examples of joint assistance at the country level that did not involve all UNDG members, including the United Nations initiative on adolescent health in Botswana, which involved UNDP, UNFPA, UNICEF and WHO; and the collaboration between UNDP, UNFPA and bilateral donors on the 1998 population census in Malawi. There was a question as to whether all agencies should participate in every initiative, as that could result in a "shopping list" of activities. First, the United Nations should assess with a Government what its priorities were and then invite the necessary agencies to participate.

136. The Executive Director, UNICEF, said there must be a balance between the distinctiveness of agencies and coordination. UNDAF was a planning framework that brought coherence and value to the United Nations interventions and interactions with countries, thus avoiding having too many priorities. Concerning reporting, she reported to the UNICEF Executive Board through a variety of reports, including MTRs reviews and other country programme documentation. Also available to the UNDG agencies were the reports of the resident coordinators and the annual reports of each agency.

137. A delegation said that in many cases, countries' socio-economic progress was hindered by obligations to the IFIs. The effectiveness of the United Nations system in meeting the development challenge would benefit from their willingness to take into account the UNDAF analysis. He asked what was the reaction of the IFIs to CCAs and the resident coordinator system and what action could be taken to strengthen cooperation with the IFIs at the country level. The Executive Director, UNFPA, said that once a good CCA had been completed, it provided an opportunity to involve ministries of finance in the work of the United Nations system. The Executive Director, UNICEF, said that CCAs involved all development partners and, in some countries, for example Malawi and Ghana, the World Bank had signed the UNDAF. The Administrator, UNDP, said that discussions were under way between the UNDG members and the World Bank with regard to a new partnership approach.

138. A speaker said that more coordination was needed in emergencies and asked about the intentions of UNDG members to pursue that goal. Another asked the executive heads of UNDP, UNFPA and UNICEF to address the transition from relief to development. The Administrator, UNDP, said that UNDAF could be used to broaden the work of the United Nations in the humanitarian fields. The Deputy Executive Director, WFP, said that in 1998, both the humanitarian segment of the Economic and Social Council and the triennial policy review had addressed joint work by United Nations partners. There were other forms of cooperation, including working groups, joint assessment missions, the establishment of memoranda of understanding and the inter-agency mechanisms. The Strategic Framework for Afghanistan was an example of coordination. At the country level, there was no reason why the humanitarian aspects of development should not be included in the CCA and UNDAF exercises.

139. The Executive Director, UNICEF, said that of the 18 UNDAF pilot countries, none were complex emergencies. Issues that remained to be addressed included the question of the Strategic Framework or UNDAF in cases where there was no functioning Government. Relief and development were both part of the humanitarian response, but donors' definitions of related terms could improve. For example, health was considered a humanitarian response but not education, even though education was key to assisting children in conflict.

140. A speaker said that UNDP had been engaged in some countries in such activities as mine clearance and assistance to returnees, and asked that as manager of the resident coordinator system, UNDP respond more actively to such needs. The representative of Lebanon cited the importance of post-conflict peace-building, mentioning his own country's experience, and asked how such work could be coordinated and studied for lessons learned. The Executive Director, UNFPA, said that she had visited Lebanon and been impressed by the convergence of relief, rehabilitation/construction and development activities taking place, all involving the private sector, NGOs and bilateral donors. The Administrator, UNDP, said that the International Peace Academy was studying lessons learned from peace-building that could be shared.

141. Concerning follow-up to the international conferences, a delegation said that the Economic and Social Council had held a session on integrated follow-up and asked if UNDG had taken up the issue. The Deputy Executive Director, WFP, said that a joint, coordinated response would be helpful, as it would allow agencies to focus on the conferences that were appropriate to them. A speaker asked about experience to date in integrating follow-up to global conferences with national priorities. The Administrator, UNDP, said that one of the best analyses along those lines had been done by the United Nations country team in Pakistan, which had addressed how national goals coincided with the goals of the conferences. He said that the Administrative Committee on Coordination agreement on poverty eradication was an example of how to build effectively on the outcomes of conferences.

142. Referring to a recent visit to Sierra Leone, a speaker asked the executive heads to address the follow-up by UNDG to the Secretary-General's report on Africa, specifically how the report's conclusions were being applied at the field level. The Deputy Executive Director, WFP, said that Sierra Leone was an

example of a country for which there had been high hopes for relief and development, but which had returned to crisis. The Executive Director, UNICEF, said that UNDG had provided input to the Secretary-General's report and that the Administrative Committee had highlighted the importance of follow-up. UNDG had prepared a matrix of follow-up activity which had been sent to all country offices, and the process would be reviewed periodically. The CCAs, UNDAFs and specific reports also took into account the priority for Africa.

143. A speaker asked about the possibility of including a wider range of participants from civil society, especially NGOs, in the UNDAF process. The Executive Director, UNICEF, said that in most UNDAF pilot countries, there had been some type of involvement of civil society.

144. A delegation said that the development of common indicators was an area in which the United Nations could contribute to the development process. These indicators were very useful in identifying the progress made by United Nations programmes. The speaker asked how other partners were participating in the development and use of common indicators. Another delegation asked to what extent national Governments were involved in the development of the indicators. The Executive Director, UNFPA, said that the United Nations system had done much work in that area. There was agreement on the use of common indicators at the country level, with their applicability depending on a country's level of development. Programmes did not have to address every indicator. The indicators would be used as benchmarks to develop analytical systems required to monitor progress.

145. A delegation asked about country-level collaboration in the fight against HIV/AIDS in Southern Africa. The Executive Director, UNFPA, said that in Botswana, a United Nations theme group was preparing a national priority programme to address HIV/AIDS control. There was also a programme for young people's health that involved bilateral donors.

146. In closing, the Executive Director, UNICEF, said that UNDAF, while still posing many challenges, had provided many benefits. It was still early in the process, which had begun in the middle of countries' programming processes. There were now more cohesive teams at the country level, and UNDAF brought to the programming process such fundamental issues as human rights and child rights, raising them as systemic, rather than single-agency issues. There was a better analysis of country situations, as for example in Viet Nam, where United Nations activities were focused on poorer areas, or Mozambique, where agencies were working with the Government in developing programmes for HIV/AIDS. The original challenge had been to clarify the role of the Government and to involve agencies not working in the country. There was still a need to reduce the programming process.

147. The Executive Director, UNFPA, said that the common goal of the United Nations system should be to respond specifically to countries' needs at the country level.

148. The Administrator, UNDP, said that UNDAF should be the most effective framework at the country level. It would, however, take several years to roll out completely. Guidelines on the CCA and UNDAF would be presented to the Administrative Committee on Coordination at its spring 1999 session. UNDAF should not become a canopy for disparate and individual programmes. He said he would like UNDAF to be a common programme document that replaced and consolidated all programming instruments. At present, he favoured bringing the Bretton Woods institutions into strategic arrangements at the country level rather that including them in the UNDAF process. In that regard, one factor was that the World Bank did not recognize the resident coordinator as its coordinator at the country level. Finally, he said that there had been a major overhaul of UNDP in recent years, as well in the United Nations itself, although the expected support from donors had not been forthcoming. The United Nations - a "precious asset" for Member States - needed to have more to be able to do more. He stressed the need for growth in assured and predictable resources for

development. In the end, States were responsible for the development work of the United Nations.

B. Harmonization of budgets

149. On behalf of the three organizations, the UNICEF Comptroller presented the second report on "Harmonization of budgets: UNDP, UNFPA and UNICEF" (DP/1999/6; DP/FPA/1999/1; E/ICEF/AB/L.2) and expressed appreciation for the constructive comments provided by the Advisory Committee for Administrative and Budgetary Questions in its report (DP/1999/7; DP/FPA/1999/3; E/ICEF/1999/AB/L.4).

150. The Comptroller reiterated the continuing commitment of the three organizations to work together to ensure that a harmonized approach to their support budgets, the format of which would continue to be modified to reflect not only identified improvements, but also new requirements as they emerged. She recalled the efforts leading to the harmonized proposal which concentrated on the development of comparable and transparent budget information, while preserving the unique nature and requirements of each organization. In other words, she said that harmonization meant more similarity but did not mean sameness.

151. For the benefit of delegations that had not participated in previous discussions of the subject, she briefly described the definitions of Programme, Programme Support and Management and Administration. She also described the two major changes proposed in the report. The executive summary had been reorganized to move the resource plan as the first table to be presented and to make the financial framework the first section under the executive summary. Also, a new table summarized key areas of savings and how the savings were redirected. All tables would show gross and net budget figures, but approval would still be made on the proposed gross budget.

152. Asked to clarify gross and net support budgets, the Comptroller said that the gross support budget reflected the total activities the organization would carry out, and the net support budget was the result of deducting the income to the budget. Each organizaton would explain this clearly in its respective budget document.

153. A delegation asked whether the information provided to the Advisory Committee concerning a detailed breakdown of staff costs and operating expenses would also be made available to members of the Executive Boards on request. The Comptroller said that each organization would provide any information requested by the Advisory Committee. Another speaker endorsed the inclusion of the item "government local office cost contribution" as income to the budget.

Part two

1999 ANNUAL SESSION

Held at United Nations Headquarters from 7 to 11 June 1999

I. ORGANIZATION OF THE SESSION

A. Opening of the session

154. In his opening remarks, the President of the Executive Board welcomed delegations, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), National Committees for UNICEF and UNICEF regional directors. Their presence, he said, was a clear testament to the important work before the Board. As a high-profile member of the United Nations family, and one of its leading agencies, UNICEF had a clear obligation to continue to take great strides on behalf of children and women. UNICEF involvement in such policy thrusts as the child rights-based approach, the management excellence process, gender mainstreaming and the integration of new information technologies would enable the organization to respond to the challenges of the twenty-first century.

155. He emphasized that the 1999 annual session was significant in that it would introduce a new facet to Board deliberations - the participation of eminent speakers who would articulate issues that would shape the future agenda of UNICEF. He noted, in particular, that one of the most important subjects before the Board was the issue of ensuring children's rights in Africa.

156. In conclusion, he expressed confidence that the Board would be able to find solutions to the problems affecting the welfare of children worldwide, emphasizing the need for UNICEF to reach towards even greater heights to achieve the collective vision for improving the lives of children in the next century.

157. In her introductory statement, the Executive Director spoke about the UNICEF dream for children in the twenty-first century - that they would live in a world in which they would have every opportunity to grow and develop into caring and responsible citizens, and in which childhood could be a joyous experience. She said that the global agenda for children before the Board - which was based on the belief that in all UNICEF actions, the best interests of the child must always come first - contained a vision of that future. Although those goals were shared by those involved in human development, the missing ingredient was political commitment on a global scale, as well as the resources and actions to match. Therefore, UNICEF had decided to mobilize a Leadership Initiative for Children that would culminate in a series of events linked to a Special Session of the United Nations General Assembly in 2001. She called on Board members to help define and develop a future global agenda and to build a broad consensus for action. She informed the Board that UNICEF had also proposed a global Peace and Security Agenda for Children.

158. It was essential, she continued, for UNICEF, its development partners and its dedicated network of National Committees to forge broad new alliances that have a genuine concern for human progress. In that connection, she noted in particular the benefits of the organization's close collaboration with its United Nations partners, especially within the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF), and the expanded partnership with the World Bank in a number of sectors. She paid special tribute to James Gustave Speth, who would soon be leaving as Administrator of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), and added that UNICEF looked forward to a close and productive relationship with his successor, Mark Malloch Brown.

159. In closing, the Executive Director thanked donor Governments, National Committees and the World Bank for their assistance in responding to the humanitarian emergency in and around Kosovo, and spoke of the tremendous difference those funds were making to the region's children. She reminded delegations of what a proportionately generous outpouring of assistance could do for children in the forgotten and overlooked humanitarian emergencies in Africa, Asia, the Middle East and Latin America, and invited UNICEF partners to continue to fight for the survival, protection and development of children in the new millennium.

B. Adoption of the agenda

160. The agenda, timetable and organization of work of the session, as contained in document E/ICEF/1999/8, were adopted. The agenda contained the following items:

Item 1:	Opening of the session: statements by the President of the Executive Board and the Executive Director
Item 2:	Adoption of the provisional agenda and timetable and organization of work
Item 3:	Report of the Executive Director (Part II)
Item 4:	Positioning UNICEF to meet the needs of children and women in the twenty-first century
Item 5:	Ensuring children's rights in Africa
Item 6:	Progress, challenges and future strategies in basic education
Item 7:	Progress report on the UNICEF strategy and investments in information technology (IT)
Item 8:	Progress report on mainstreaming gender in UNICEF
Item 9:	Oral report on implementation of the health strategy for UNICEF
Item 10:	Reports on field visits of Executive Board members
Item 11:	Other matters
Item 12:	Closing of the session: remarks by the Executive Director and the President of the Executive Board

161. In accordance with rule 50.2 and the annex of the Rules of Procedure, the Secretary of the Executive Board announced that 80 observer delegations had submitted credentials for the session. In addition, 2 United Nations bodies, 4 specialized agencies, 21 NGOs, 15 National Committees for UNICEF and Palestine had submitted credentials.

162. Under this agenda item, several delegations raised the issue of the distribution of documents in languages. They expressed concern about the delays and called for equity among the languages to be respected. They stressed that the lack of documentation in languages might prevent them from participating fully in Board deliberations. The Secretary of the Executive Board acknowledged the problems raised by delegations, adding that this issue had been addressed by the Board in the past, and recalled the timing of the submission of documents. She proposed that the secretariat consult with the United Nations Department of General Assembly Affairs and Conference Services about the difficulties encountered in meeting the six-week deadline, and the President said that this issue would be taken up later during the session.

II. DELIBERATIONS OF THE EXECUTIVE BOARD

A. Report of the Executive Director (Part II)

163. The Executive Board had before it for review part II of the report of the Executive Director (E/ICEF/1999/4 (Part II)). In her introductory remarks, the Executive Director emphasized that the report was the first of its kind on progress made against the four organizational priorities and the major areas of action as approved by the Board at its second regular session in September 1998 (E/ICEF/1998/6/Rev.1, decision 1998/22). The report was an initial attempt to provide a comprehensive overview of UNICEF actions against the backdrop of the medium-term plan (MTP) and in the broader context of the World Summit for Children and Convention on the Rights of the Child. It was a starting point for identifying achievements and constraints, as well as for learning from experiences, in order to inform future actions. The report reflected UNICEF efforts to use the MTP as a framework for its activities in different locations.

164. The Executive Director stated that the MTP had been used in the preparation of office management plans (OMPs) for headquarters divisions and regional offices, review of the implementation of OMPs and resource allocations. The report would be further refined with the guidance and suggestions of the Board. She emphasized that the report reflected a strong and full UNICEF commitment to the multi-year funding framework (MYFF) and to results-based management. UNICEF recognized that performance management concepts were better suited for service delivery and that they required adaptation for other activities such as capacity-building, advocacy, policy dialogue and partnerships. In the search for a process of results-based management and reporting, UNICEF had held discussions with UNDP and the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), and had also consulted with bilateral agencies. In addition, UNICEF had set up a cross-divisional working group to review the concepts of results-based management and its implications for the organization.

165. Many speakers commended UNICEF for an analytical report, which signaled a significant move from the old style of reporting. They welcomed the first report of this kind on progress structured along the MTP and expressed appreciation for UNICEF efforts to move towards a more results-based report in 1999, as the Board had not requested that this be done until the year 2000.

166. However, some delegations requested that the reporting on advocacy activities be more systematic and analytical, targeting subjects that were most important to countries. A number of delegations commented that chapter III of the report on progress towards organizational priorities illustrated activities instead of results. The usefulness of the global context was also noted. One speaker appreciated UNICEF efforts to develop a performance management system. Support was also expressed for UNICEF work on the 20/20 Initiative.

167. Mention was made of the difficulty in distinguishing UNICEF contributions to overall progress in human development, as well as of the possible danger of distorting measurable short-term results with long-term results, which were less measurable. Many delegations recognized the challenges in aggregated reporting, especially in view of the fact that UNICEF was a decentralized, field-driven organization. Moreover, it was not clear at what level results should be reported, how results could be attributed and how they could be reported in the areas of advocacy and policy. Therefore, it was suggested that the process of results-based management be gradual and long term. One speaker said that results-based management was also being considered by other United Nations agencies; thus, synergy within the system, especially in the United Nations Development Group (UNDG), should be sought. Many delegations requested that informal discussions and consultations be organized after the present Board session to share experiences and ideas, and the secretariat agreed.

168. UNICEF was requested to expand its reporting on aggregated results that linked objectives with activities, and planning and budgeting with outcomes. More information on constraints and lessons learned was also requested. Many speakers suggested that a flexible system or framework be developed to aggregate

results, insisting that in order to accomplish this, quantitative and qualitative indicators were equally important.

169. However, a speaker cautioned against UNICEF using substantial financial and human resources to aggregate results, suggesting, rather, that these resources be used to support country-based programming. It was suggested further that UNICEF could not afford the time necessary to bring about the structural reforms required for results-based management. The secretariat responded that the centrality of country programmes was the key to result-based management. Furthermore, UNICEF was urged to adhere to neutral, non-political and non-discriminatory principles. In the process of dialogue, recipient countries should be fully involved.

170. The importance of poverty elimination and support for special protection measures for children in armed conflict were stressed by several delegations. Another delegation suggested that protection measures be adopted urgently at global, regional and country levels.

171. Given that income from the private sector had increased in 1998, one delegation requested information on the status of resources. The secretariat explained that resources from the private sector were spent in the same way as resources from other sources: general resources were allocated based on the formula approved by the Board at its 1997 annual session (E/ICEF/1997/12/Rev.1, decision 1997/18) and supplementary funding levels were also approved by the Board.

172. Several speakers urged UNICEF to remain active in responding to the HIV/AIDS pandemic in collaboration with other agencies, especially in sub-Saharan Africa. Continued UNICEF work in the area of reducing the incidence of malaria was also supported.

173. The need to strengthen monitoring and evaluation was noted by several speakers. The use and availability of data were very important, and it was felt that work in this area should be advanced. Another delegation emphasized the importance of establishing monitoring systems on the social aspects of crises and requested that basic indicators include this area of concern.

174. A few delegations expressed concern regarding the decline in official development assistance (ODA). As resources were limited, UNICEF should have clear priorities and focus. One delegation drew the Board's attention to the decision on the allocation of general resources and expressed concern that some poor countries in Asia were seriously affected. In that connection, UNICEF was urged to mobilize additional resources for least developed countries (LDCs). The secretariat responded that the formula for general resources allocation was aimed at allocating more resources to LDCs. Given that under the new formula some countries received fewer resources than others, UNICEF would work with those countries to reduce the impact.

175. One delegation asked what action UNICEF was planning to take to tackle the problem of arsenic-contaminated water in Bangladesh and requested a briefing on the subject (see also para. 327 below). The Executive Director said that UNICEF was working very closely with other partners, such as the World Bank, on this issue.

176. Delegations expressed their appreciation of and support for UNICEF in its goal-focused and rights-based approaches. Some delegations welcomed the advocacy role of UNICEF in the global peace process and its humanitarian efforts in Kosovo. UNICEF was complimented for the widely circulated Implementation Handbook for the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

177. However, several speakers expressed concern about the implications of the rights-based approach for human resources and asked how UNICEF intended to train its staff. Concern was also expressed that UNICEF was reducing its human resources costs by cutting posts, which affected staff morale, and by substituting regular staff in posts with Junior Professional Officers (JPOs).

The Executive Director explained that human resources development was a UNICEF priority. She said that UNICEF had basic competence in such areas as health, nutrition, education and water supply and sanitation and that the organization would continuously improve its staff capacity, especially in rights programming and in mainstreaming emergency preparedness into country programmes. UNICEF would work with existing staff; changes, if any, would be minor, and no regular staff would be replaced by JPOs.

178. In response to comments about the low rate of programme implementation, the secretariat explained that some factors affecting programme implementation were beyond UNICEF control, for example, emergency situations, armed conflicts and natural disasters. There were also internal factors, such as the implementation of the Programme Manager System (PROMS) and unliquidated cash assistance. The secretariat assured Board members that programme implementation was a UNICEF priority.

179. One delegation wanted to know how the Management Excellence Programme had contributed to the implementation of the MTP, while another questioned how regional management teams (RMTs) developed priorities and how Governments were consulted. The secretariat explained that RMTs identified regional priorities based on country priorities, which were developed in close consultation with Governments.

Special presentations

180. As part of the discussion, the secretariat had arranged for two presentations on different aspects of the Executive Director's report. The first was by Lawrence Cooley, founder and president of Management Systems International in Washington, D.C. An expert in strategic planning and performance management, Mr. Cooley had advised the heads of a wide range of United States and international organizations, including the World Bank, the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and UNDP, on issues related to results-based management.

181. The speaker stressed that in a performance management system, strategy formulation, evaluation and implementation needed to be linked. For businesses of all kinds, results-based management had a number of potential benefits. It could promote a shared vision and focus, enhance the credibility of the organization, and provide a basis for programmatic linkages and strategic orientation within and between organizations. With regard to how this related to international development, he stated that although UNICEF had been at the forefront of performance management, the system was best designed for less complicated organizations. In international organizations, there were time lags and unreliable data that made the task more difficult, but not impossible.

182. Some of the issues and options that UNICEF should examine when considering results-based management included: the category of intervention versus goals; the level and type of results; the primary objective (learning, policy and programme direction, external reporting); the process for developing objectives and indicators; the link to the budget; comprehensiveness versus selectivity; the approach to aggregation and attribution; and the connection with larger issues of performance management, such as the use of RMTs in the annual review process.

183. He asserted that the question was not whether UNICEF should implement this type of management, but how, as there was no single solution that worked for all organizations. The most important issues were political and managerial - not methodological. The system should be focused on the real questions influencing an organization's survival and success, with particular emphasis on the process. Results-based management had spread quickly in development agencies, and the questions UNICEF was dealing with were being discussed worldwide.

184. Many delegations welcomed the presentation, stating that it was long overdue. Several speakers said that it was important for the United Nations system to come into line with the outside world. It was noted that with regard

to the MTP, it would be helpful to clarify objectives. The United Nations system had experienced one fundamental evolution recently - a decline in contributions to the general budget, with growth in supplementary funding. This was occurring in specialized agencies, where contributions were increasingly voluntary, and indicated a level of mistrust.

185. The second presentation under this agenda item demonstrated a results-based approach in the work of UNICEF. The Chief of the Health Section, Programme Division, outlined the progress made in combating iodine deficiency disorders. The problem, as it existed in 1990, involved 1.6 billion persons at risk of mental and physical retardation, 750 million persons with goitre, 43 million with brain damage and 100,000 cretins born each year. At the time, less than 20 per cent of the population of affected countries used iodized salt. UNICEF launched a programme that comprised the following: (a) advocacy, partnership and alliance-building; (b) a rights-based approach; (c) work with the private sector, including providing training, technology transfer and practical assistance to salt producers; (d) a combination of UNICEF fund-raising and direct funding, involving supplementary funds; (e) "leverage" of other sources of funds; and (f) a strong monitoring system.

186. As a result of UNICEF efforts, currently 14 million infants were protected from the threat of mental retardation. Approximately 70 per cent of households worldwide were using iodized salt. All but seven countries had salt legislation or regulations. Overall, global change had occurred and the World Summit for Children goal was close to being reached. UNICEF inputs of $70 million, if used directly, would have achieved change in a few large countries. Through leadership and advocacy, as well as the work of country offices, UNICEF investments were used instead to amplify the impact of inputs tenfold over a six-year period. Over 60 UNICEF country offices were involved, supported by headquarters and regional offices.

B. Positioning UNICEF to meet the needs of children and women in the twenty-first century

187. The President of the Executive Board introduced the discussion, which was the centrepiece of the Board's agenda. He noted that, as the international community entered a critical period, UNICEF and its partners were taking stock of the progress made for children since the World Summit for Children and the adoption of the Convention on the Rights of the Child. The discussion was a first step towards defining an agenda for the future; it would continue over the next year and culminate in a decision by the Executive Board at the annual session in 2000.

188. As part of the discussion, three speakers were invited to address the Board. Three documents prepared by the secretariat served as background material for the discussions: "The future global agenda for children - imperatives for the twenty-first century" (E/ICEF/1999/10); "Progress report on follow-up to the World Summit for Children" (E/ICEF/1999/9); and "Programme cooperation for children and women from a human rights perspective" (E/ICEF/1999/11).

189. The Executive Director stated that this format would provide the opportunity for a spontaneous and lively discussion. She thanked the speakers for coming to the Board session and said that their input would help inform the future strategic direction of UNICEF. She felt that it was very appropriate for Board members to engage in a dialogue of this nature, and invited all to participate in order to move the work of the organization forward to reach the dream she had spoken of in her opening remarks.

190. The first presentation was given by Dr. Savitri Goonesekere, who addressed the issue of human rights as the guiding framework for human development. Dr. Goonesekere, a senior professor of law at the University of Colombo, has had a distinguished academic and legal career and has published extensively on the issues of children's and women's rights.

191. She spoke about the rights-based approach to development, which was not new for UNICEF. For the past 10 years, UNICEF had experienced tremendous success in taking the de jure rights of children, as embodied in the Convention of the Rights of the Child, and making them de facto rights through their integration in the practical work of the organization. She also pointed to UNICEF work in support of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women.

192. She stressed that although there continued to be widespread violations of human rights, the remarkable victories achieved in the areas of decolonization, democratization and the erosion of apartheid (both race and gender) must be recognized. The linkage of child rights to human rights was not made easily, and, therefore, the Convention on the Rights of the Child could be seen as one of the core human rights treaties. Although, historically, human rights treaties were divided into civil-political rights and socio-economic rights, the situation was changing in the aftermath of the Vienna Declaration of the World Conference on Human Rights, and human rights were now being considered in a holistic manner. This led to a rights-based approach to development.

193. She addressed how the connection was being made between human rights and development. She suggested the concept of the "localization of human rights", where rights were being written into constitutions and bills of rights that would hold Governments accountable for pro-active policy. There was also a new role for the courts to integrate the conventions on the rights of women and children. The role of the State was diminishing, while that of the private sector was growing. As accountability was now being assigned to both the State and the private sector, the capacity to integrate rights into the overall development process was being strengthened.

194. She also spoke of the "internationalization of human rights" - seen in the conferences held in Vienna, Beijing and Cairo - which connected rights to policy. As a result, women and children, who through the centuries had been disempowered, were gaining their place in the human rights discourse. She said that the concept of a partnership in human rights must be promoted.

195. In conclusion, she stated that economic progress and the fulfilment of development, with a focus on human rights and dignity, should be sought. Ethics and action were interdependent. To realize the rights of children and women, the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women must be an inherent part of that effort.

196. Many delegations expressed their appreciation for the inspiring and insightful presentation. One delegation stated that, rather than referring to a "rights-based approach", it should be called a "rights- and needs-based approach". He asked the speaker to elaborate on the connection of children's and women's rights to development, and wondered also whether regional efforts contributed to global efforts or undermined them. Concerning the issue of breaking the public-private divide, one delegation asked how the accountability of people and NGOS could be assured.

197. Another delegation stated that the enforcement of such laws needed the participation of community-based organizations and civil society. The delegation felt that certain declarations were too sweeping and attempted to move too quickly. Yet another delegation said that the Convention on the Rights of the Child addressed the right of the child to participate, to articulate and to advocate, and asked the speaker to comment.

198. It was noted by another delegation that, in her country, it was difficult to incorporate the rights of the child into legislation because there was a missing link - that of the rural sector - which had cultural differences. Another delegation queried how human rights could be enforced when there were no treaty obligations. It was also asked how international norms of human rights could be strengthened in light of declining ODA.

199. In response to these queries, Dr. Goonesekere stated that in the area of connecting children's and women's rights to development, sustainable development meant the recognition of human rights. It was a people-based process that accommodated accountability in the areas of civil-political rights and socio-economic rights. Regarding regionalism versus internationalism, she felt that regional instruments must reinforce and not undermine international standards. As to breaking the public-private divide, the State must be held accountable for violations of human rights, but the private sphere was also included in conventions, and private actors must be accountable. On the question of laws versus policy, she noted that the two must work in concert. As for the accountability of Government throughout the process of rights, she said that those who held public office must be scrutinized. Socio-economic rights presupposed accountable governance.

200. On the issue of child participation, Dr. Goonesekere stated that this was a difficult area to interpret and plan for, and that there must be overall balance. It was argued that if a child wanted to work to contribute to family survival, this was "participation". As an evolving concept, participation could be used fruitfully to reinforce other rights.

201. In the area of cultural differences, the speaker stated that neither culture nor laws were static concepts. Education could help to create better customs in the areas, for example, of women's inheritance and female genital mutilation (FGM). Through education, rural women could go from victim to actor. Regarding declining ODA, she stated that it was up to Governments to put health and education ahead of armaments, and they needed to be pressured to do so. She concluded by saying that treaty-based law was powerful, but it did allow for "non-participation". Now that the Conventions were in place, no Government should be able to say, "We haven't ratified the treaties, therefore we can deny people their rights".

202. The next speaker was Dr. Lincoln Chen, Executive Vice-President of the Rockefeller Foundation, with oversight responsibilities for programmes in food security, health equity, employment, creativity and innovation, population and global environment. The title of his presentation was "Children and Human Development: Looking into the Future". The overall thrust of his talk was that, as the world entered a new era of globalization, there was a danger with regard to human development, but also many opportunities.

203. He stated that in times of rapid socio-economic change, as were being experienced, many people, particularly children, suffered. There was a danger of inequality, instability and social exclusion. Global private markets generated great wealth, but also great inequality. Many claimed that both sides of the development coin were needed - private markets and social protection. Globalization brought financial, ecological and political instability, and social exclusion. He said that human development, as defined by the late Mahbub ul Haque, was a process of expanding real freedom for people. Children were the cutting edge of development as well as the ultimate investment, one that generated life-long returns. Globalization called for globalized solutions, and basic education was the linchpin. Creative partnerships must be forged among government, business, the press and civil society organizations because most problems were too complicated for any one actor. A good example of broad cooperation was the eradication of polio.

204. Dr. Chen then spoke of the "globalization of new values". Because of the work of the United Nations, there was already a strong international consensus, as demonstrated by the world conferences of the last decade. Vision and energized institutions were needed to move forward, and UNICEF could lead the way. The organization had the required know-how and a history of dynamic partnerships. Children, he asserted, were a moral force.

205. In the ensuing discussion, one delegation suggested that culture was a positive antidote to globalization, and each country must protect its culture. Children must be educated through their communities, an important aspect of the mission of UNICEF. Another delegation advised UNICEF to focus on those areas

where it had a strategic advantage. He asserted that UNICEF was well placed for a leadership role and suggested that this could extend to executing programmes with private sector partners.

206. One delegation remarked that the negative impact of environmental degradation should be added to the list of scourges, in particular in areas near former nuclear sites. UNICEF needed to promote policies that maintained ecological security for women and children. The President, accepting that globalization was irreversible, asked if the State would remain in tact or would dissolve. He noted that the danger of globalization was clear, but wondered what the opportunities were for children in a globalized world, particularly in Africa. An NGO representative asked how UNICEF could encourage the media to provide better balance in their presentation of current issues.

207. Dr. Chen responded that the highest priority for UNICEF, and the one with the greatest payoff, was basic education for all. Partnerships of all kinds should be encouraged, including with the private sector. He said that there were especially good opportunities in vaccine development. He suggested that the nation State would indeed survive, but it would most likely evolve. With regard to opportunities for children in a globalized world, he offered that IT was an area where children might benefit. On the role the media, he stated that there was a need to see them not as a conduit, but as an organization form that was capable - with proper pressure - of developing a more balanced role.

208. The third presentation - entitled "Helping Disadvantaged Children: The Anti-Poverty Approach" - was given by Ricardo Moran, senior economist with the Sustainable Development Department of the Inter-American Development Bank. He said that this approach was effective because it provided new insights on cost-effectiveness. It also increased resource availability and policy influence and facilitated collaborative efforts with financial institutions. Mr. Moran applied the anti-poverty approach to infant mortality and child development. Significant reductions in child mortality since the Second World War led to surging numbers of children in poverty. The challenge today was to give these children a fair chance to escape poverty, and early childhood development (ECD) was the key.

209. He described the poverty cycle as follows: young, poor and unskilled parents, who have few parenting skills, have children early; they often conceive stunted children with impaired learning abilities; their children fail in school and become unskilled youth who lack opportunity; and this leads to antisocial behaviour and dead-end jobs, turning them into young, poor, unskilled parents, where the cycle begins again. In order to break the poverty cycle, people needed marketable skills, a good education and training. Investments in early childhood - quality reproductive health services, maternal and child care and nutrition, training in parenting skills, community education and quality child care services emphasizing psychosocial development - would break the poverty cycle. Given the financial, human and administrative resource constraints, society must work with young people before they have children. It should be pointed out to financiers that breaking the poverty cycle was not only morally important, but it was economically sound and politically attractive.

210. A number of delegations welcomed the speaker's remarks and requested that such presentations be continued at future sessions. The speaker was asked if his remarks referred more to urban or rural poor. Although the rate of urbanization was high, the majority of the world's poor still lived in rural areas, and interventions for urban and rural poor would certainly be different. One delegation emphasized the importance of ECD, but stressed the need for further discussion, while another speaker asked if there were, in fact, measurable data in this area.

211. On the issue of urban versus rural poor, Mr. Moran said that there was indeed an important distinction. Given the diversity of problems, needs assessments could be used to customize programmes. In response to the speaker who emphasized the importance of ECD, he stressed that a basic necessity in this area was quality primary education, which required, inter alia, infrastructure and good teachers. Regarding the availability of quantitative evidence, targets

could be identified that could provide concrete data. He alluded to a study in the United States which indicated that those who had a preschool education fared much better in life. The study provided technically defensible estimates, with a specific cost/benefit ratio.

212. The President thanked the guest speakers and turned the discussion to the examination of the reports presented under this agenda item. One speaker said that the interventions by the speakers corresponded very well to the reports that served as background to the discussion.

The future global agenda for children - imperatives for the twenty-first century

213. Many of the speakers commended UNICEF on the report, as contained in document E/ICEF/1999/10. They considered it clear, thought-provoking and very useful. One delegation said that the report accurately reflected the conclusions and challenges of achieving the goals of the World Summit for Children, with another speaker recognizing the difficulty in reaching all of them. He added that, in that connection, the issue of resource availability must be viewed realistically. Support was expressed for further steps to be taken to accelerate progress in this and other areas.

214. Numerous delegations expressed appreciation for the pioneering work of UNICEF in this area, and said that the Board,should be deeply involved in building a consensus. The report, it was felt, presented a broader, more holistic and realistic approach to the organization's focus on its work beyond 2000. Satisfaction was expressed for the organization's focus on enhancing its competence in each area defined and for its advocacy work. The importance of monitoring progress and the experience of lessons learned was also stressed.

215. Many of the interventions dealt with the issue of UNICEF priorities for the future. The importance of defining clear objectives was raised by a number of speakers. In general, delegations commented positively on the priority areas and outcomes and on the organization's commitment to further define specific results for which it would be accountable. However, one speaker expressed the view that the priority outcomes were very broad and covered wide-ranging issues. Questions were raised about the complementarity between the priority areas and outcomes. One delegation also requested clarification about whether setting this new future global agenda would require the phasing out of elements of previous UNICEF priorities.

216. Several speakers said that the new future global agenda should focus on early childhood care (ECC), basic education and adolescents, with the latter also involved as participants in the process. One delegation said that UNICEF had yet to present clear ideas on adolescents. It was felt that street children and school drop-outs also warranted special attention. Other areas requiring priority focus included safe motherhood, child nutrition, malaria, poverty reduction and support for children in armed conflict. The lack of reference in the report to UNICEF emergency and humanitarian activities was noted by one delegation, which wanted to know how this would fit into UNICEF priorities. Another speaker expressed the view that the future agenda should focus more on prevention. In addition, one speaker wanted to know the extent to which UNICEF saw different regions focusing on different priorities and how that would be reflected. Another speaker wanted to know the link between the proposed priorities and available resources.

217. While commending UNICEF for its lead role in tackling HIV/AIDS, one speaker requested examples of where UNICEF had the comparative advantage and its role in the future. The issue of collaboration in this area was also raised. Delegations wanted to know how UNICEF envisaged working with other partners, particularly in Africa. It was essential, said several delegations, to maintain a clear gender perspective in all areas. Girls must be a priority. In this connection, special attention should be given to gender discrimination, with increased efforts to fight institutional discrimination.

218. The issue of partnerships was raised by numerous speakers. One delegation stressed the need for "creative" partnerships, notably within the United Nations system, as well as with donor Governments, NGOs and others. Another speaker noted that the global agenda involved many players and wondered how UNICEF planned to reach out to Governments and the private sector in building consensus. He added that it was important to build on the experiences of international conferences. Clarification of the roles of each of the organizations or agencies was also requested. Along that line, one speaker wanted to know the link between the proposed priorities and available resources.

219. A representative of the Standing Group of National Committees for UNICEF stated that defining a future global agenda for children was one of the most important responsibilities before the Board as the century comes to a close. The agenda would provide the framework for all future National Committee work. He looked forward to the development of concrete quantifiable goals, including clear steps towards gender equality in access to education. A second challenge for UNICEF was to develop a process that would mobilize new partners and generate public support during the period leading up to the Special Session of the General Assembly in 2001, which should announce new and bold commitments.

220. A representative of the NGO Committee on UNICEF stated that the Committee would become more actively involved in initiatives for child development. The Committee was working towards becoming more decentralized and issues-oriented, which would lead to the active participation of more NGOs in the work of UNICEF to make a better world for children in the twenty-first century.

221. The Director, Programme Division, was encouraged by the many positive comments from delegations. The secretariat, he continued, also benefited from the many examples of national experiences. He stated that the status and well-being of women were central to the realization of children's rights, but families - and fathers - also had a very important role to play. In response a query on how the priorities outlined in the MTP related to the future agenda, he said that there must be better integration of programmatic initiatives.

222. Regarding HIV/AIDS, UNICEF had a comparative advantage in fighting the pandemic, in such areas as mother-to-child transmission (MTCT), life skills education, care and support for AIDS orphans, participation of adolescents and peer-to-peer counselling.

223. In response to a query on resource mobilization, he stated that UNICEF would be focusing on ECC and education, with an emphasis on adolescence. There was an important link between global partnerships and advocacy, and local partnerships and programmatic interventions. UNICEF would continue to forge partnerships locally and globally to mobilize the resources required. On the issue of UNDAF and the recently proposed emergency development framework, UNICEF was working closely with UNDG, the United Nations at large, bilateral organizations (in the context of sector-wide approaches (SWAPs) and sectoral investment programmes (SIPs)) and multilateral organizations. The World Bank and UNICEF were redefining their partnership to maximize the links between the Comprehensive Development Framework, UNDAF and the Common Country Assessments (CCAs) at the country level.

224. He noted that regional priorities were shaped by national realities, and noted further the important remarks given from an African perspective, specifically on the importance of HIV/AIDS, malaria and children in armed conflict.

225. The focus of UNICEF work beyond 2000 would continue to be on issues of survival, within the context of an ECC and life-cycle approach. Humanitarian emergencies were being mainstreamed into the country programme process. He welcomed the statements of the Standing Group of National Committees for UNICEF and the NGO Committee on UNICEF.

226. The Executive Director stressed that UNICEF was a country-driven organization and priorities in programming were country-based, taking into

account partner Governments and NGOs. Resource allocations were determined by the countries themselves. She stated that there was still a great deal to do on the survival agenda, but some countries had moved beyond the survival phase, and multiple indicator cluster surveys (MICS) would help shape future discussions.

Progress report on follow-up to the World Summit for Children

227. In commenting on this report, as contained in document E/ICEF/1999/9, a number of delegations emphasized the importance of achieving the goals of the World Summit for Children. The priority areas of ECC, quality education and a focus on adolescents were important, but further discussion was needed. It was noted that national and subnational reviews should continue. One delegation encouraged others to assist in funding and requested that UNICEF try to achieve an operational balance to address the under-five mortality rate (U5MR), maternal morality and child nutrition. Because of some sluggish progress in Africa and South Asia, there was a need for accelerated attention.

228. It was felt that monitoring and evaluation should have received more coverage in the report. A status report on MICS and trends for the future was requested. U5MR areas of focus continued to be of high priority, particularly in key countries in Africa and South Asia. Although support was expressed for the UNICEF measles strategy, it was felt that the goals in the area of neonatal tetanus were too sweeping and should focus on reducing its incidence rather than complete elimination. Support was also voiced for continued emphasis on women's health. UNICEF was urged to seek practical and affordable ways to combat HIV/AIDS as a key issue for child health. Reform, financing, service delivery and monitoring and evaluation needed to be emphasized at headquarters as well as at the country level.

229. It was noted that there had been many positive results over the last decade. National plans of action had successfully integrated children's concerns into national goals. The medium-term objectives of the World Summit had been achieved, but many difficulties still existed, and the end-decade goals were a major challenge. Child development had entered a new era, and future programmes of action must take into account basic needs, while respecting national development plans.

230. Many delegations expressed the need to accelerate national and international efforts. It was felt that the report before the Board was well structured, but lacked mention of partnerships outside the United Nations system, which were crucial to success. One speaker asked for an account of cooperation with the Bretton Woods institutions, regional development banks and bilateral agencies. Concern was expressed that in many areas, goals were not being met. This was a challenge for the next MTP, as well as for the Special Session of the General Assembly to be held in 2001.

231. Concerning the rights-based approach, it was felt that UNICEF must rethink the quantitative approach to achieving the goals of the World Summit and adjust its methods. In the area of HIV/AIDS, it might be necessary to redesign the overall approach. One delegation requested that the follow-up document elaborate on how water supply and sanitation fit into future strategies. Another speaker noted that the area of water supply and sanitation was a sweeping one and not clearly reflected in the MTP or in the draft outline of the global agenda, and he sought elaboration.

232. One delegation stated that the World Summit was an unparalleled catalyst. There had been many positive developments, including the International Treaty to Ban Landmines and the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court. But there remained much unfinished business, including a continuing need to help marginalized children. In addition, UNICEF should share lessons learned from its child protection programmes with others. Another delegation highlighted the need to increase investment in the social sectors.

233. It was noted that economic disequilibrium had left millions with inadequate social services. A delegation stated that the recommendations and

proposals contained in the report provided a good basis, but efforts must be made to halt the deterioration of achievements. ODA must be increased at the same time as a solution to the debt crisis was found. In addition, developing countries must have greater access to international markets.

234. The Director, Evaluation, Policy and Planning Division, concurred with delegations that children had brought the international community together to achieve consensus, which was very valuable. Work plans developed at the national level were effective. With regard to the kinds of goals that should be envisioned, she stressed the need for dialogue and said that UNICEF would hold meetings.

235. The development process required different kinds of indicators and, therefore, quantitative data were required. The processes behind the goals must lay the foundation. Behavioural change must be promoted via awareness campaigns, while structural changes called for qualitative indicators.

236. Regarding the end-decade review and data collection, UNICEF had gone through a process of revision of the World Summit goals. At this stage, new areas needed to be added. For example, a set of indicators was needed that included birth registration, family environment and alternative care (orphans), and child labour prevention. UNICEF had to be guided by the Convention on the Rights of the Child and informed by the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women.

237. The Director indicated that MICS had been sent to all country offices. UNICEF was also working with USAID to establish a set of indicators. Data as well as policy reviews were required to build on lessons learned to develop future strategies. Human resources support had been assured.

238. Regarding the issue of partnerships, she concurred that the widest possible alliances were needed, adding that perhaps more examples of cooperation could have been included in the report. She stated further that in 2001 there would be a Special Session of the General Assembly and indicated that a special public event, which included all partners, would also be organized.

239. Concerning the draft decision contained in the document, one delegation, speaking on behalf of his regional group, felt that UNICEF was using language and engaging in dialogue that should be reserved for the Second Committee. Another delegation supported that intervention and said that similar language had already been adopted at the first regular session in January in the decision on resource mobilization. The President noted that, as the Board was not in a position to adopt the draft decision, it would be reverted to later in the session.

Programme cooperation for children and women from a human rights perspective

240. Many delegations expressed appreciation for the report, as contained in document E/ICEF/1999/11, and voiced their broad support for the rights-based approach to programming. They felt that the report highlighted how far UNICEF had come in promoting rights in its programming. Dr. Goonesekere's presentation was considered both stimulating and informative.

241. Several delegations noted that the interplay between human rights and development had gained increased recognition in their national development programmes. As poverty implied the violation of human rights, combating poverty was a vital human rights issue and development an inherent part of human rights.

242. One delegation suggested that the report should have been more problem-oriented. It was noted that although a rights-based approach was important, it was not necessarily easy to be explicit about rights in certain situations. As parents and other caregivers face difficulties in ensuring the rights of children, it was suggested that an issue of the State of the World's Children report focus on children's caregivers.

243. Another speaker felt that the report should have employed a more analytical approach, drawing from the practical experiences and lessons learned in the work of field offices worldwide. Such examples would help the Board understand how and to what extent these principles had been translated into operational terms. For example, delegations would like to have concrete examples of achievements made and problems encountered in securing the rights of children in armed conflict.

244. Several delegations questioned the use of indicators that assist in measuring effectiveness of rights-based processes and programmes. It was noted that the report recognized that indicators were not fully developed or widely adopted in some areas of children's rights, such as those related to protection and participation. Reference was made to a UNICEF-supported meeting held in 1998, where a preliminary set of indicators was developed. The delegation asked whether those indicators had been used and, if so, what kind of information they provided. Other delegations, noting that the rights-based approach was in an evolutionary phase, looked forward to more detailed accounts of implementation in future reports. Interest was also expressed in learning more about the process of developing a rights-based set of indicators. It was hoped that there would be an opportunity to participate in future discussions as these indicators were developed.

245. Another delegation expressed satisfaction with the system of indicators to monitor progress and provide better understanding of social processes that blocked the realization of children's rights. He stated, however, that indicators on the following were required: birth registration, children in the workplace, handicapped children and strategies to fight poverty. Governments needed to develop such indicators. Another speaker requested further details regarding the qualitative methods that were being used increasingly in programme evaluations. He noted with satisfaction that the training of staff in translating human rights norms and standards into practical efforts was a UNICEF priority and had already been undertaken in complex areas, such as international law applicable in armed conflict and unstable situations.

246. A number of delegations expressed the view that UNICEF, in cooperation with its partners, could address the fundamental issues of discrimination based on gender, race and ethnicity. A very important aspect of the human rights-based approach to programming was the emphasis on strengthening the participatory process in society. Several delegations expressed the hope that there would be increased understanding and acceptance of responsibility for child survival by all involved parties.

247. One delegation was encouraged that this approach would enable UNICEF to define more clearly its priorities and direct its programme interventions in a national and local context. They included a greater focus on supporting a range of policy reforms, building local capacity for basic services delivery, leveraging wider resources, broadening partnerships and facilitating community-led action, with specific attention to the sustained participation of women, youth and children. In addition, it was suggested that priority continue to be placed on satisfying the basic needs of women and children; at same time, it was imperative to consider the needs of children requiring special protection. In the area of long-term planning, it was necessary to expand infrastructure and improve legislation so that the basic rights of children and women would receive the protection of law. Many countries had achieved considerable success in this regard, and UNICEF was requested to consult with Governments and learn from their experiences.

248. Appreciation was expressed for the serious efforts made during the past few years by UNICEF to move the two Conventions forward as a normative framework for designing programmes in cooperation with national partners. A number of delegations noted the positive trend at recent Board meetings and in country programme recommendations (CPRs), which indicated an important reorientation of the strategic approach to rights-based programming.

249. It was noted that promoting the rights of the child was one of best investments a country could make in its future. A speaker, in referring to the presentation of Ricardo Moran, agreed that there must be a shift in national investments in favour of children's survival, protection and development, which would also contribute to stronger economic growth, more stable societies and ultimately sustainable development. UNICEF was encouraged to engage actively in advocacy with Governments and other actors in society to increase the political will to improve the living conditions of the child. It was felt that the report should have placed stronger emphasis on certain aspects of children's rights, such as ensuring that preconditions necessary for giving the rights of the child political priority were in place. Several delegations expressed satisfaction that UNICEF was firmly committed to raising the minimum age of child soldiers to 18 years.

250. Another delegation stated that implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child constituted a true cultural revolution which called on everyone to change their way of thinking. This applied to two perspectives - universality of rights, which were gaining ground over national legislation and custom; and the fact that children should cease to be the object of mere solicitude and assistance, and should acquire rights of their own. Emphasis should be placed on involving grass-roots organizations and communities in managing programmes and fighting discrimination. It was particularly important to employ qualitative and quantitative indicators to create an overall methodology, which would make the defence of human rights a component of development.

251. Clarification was requested by one delegation on how UNICEF intended to ensure a balance between survival and protection activities and those aimed at assuring children's rights. He wanted to know what concrete measures UNICEF had taken to secure partnerships with all United Nations partners and bilateral donors in this new way of programming. One delegation welcomed the active participation of UNICEF in the United Nations reform process, in particular in supporting the commitment of the Secretary-General to integrate a human rights perspective throughout the United Nations system, including UNDAF.

252. One delegation noted that a children's rights perspective presupposed a pro-active approach. Cooperation between UNICEF and the Committee on the Rights of the Child was warmly welcomed. It was felt that it was essential to create a close link between the United Nations system's normative and operational work. Recommendations and reports of the Committee should provide continual, valuable guidance to UNICEF activities. The report before the Board rightly drew attention to the problem of the lack of capacity of the Committee to process national reports at a reasonable pace. There was a need to increase Committee membership from 10 to 18, an issue UNICEF should actively support in light of the follow-up to the World Summit for Children.

253. A representative of the NGO International Movement ATD Fourth World commended UNICEF on a substantive and forward-looking document, which showed clearly how a human rights framework was shaping the organization's work. He referred to an earlier study on "Reaching the poorest", which had been conducted in partnership with UNICEF.

254. The Director, Programme Division, noted that the secretariat would incorporate suggestions of delegations in future work. He said that there was no contradiction regarding the balance between survival and development on the one hand, and protection of rights on the other - the rights approach reaffirmed the right to survival.

255. In the area of indicators, some UNICEF work had already come to fruition. For example, some of the indicators for human rights had been incorporated in the CCA process. UNICEF would continue to develop indicators for evaluation, both qualitative and quantitative, including indicators to measure participation.

256. He stated that UNICEF was committed to the rights-based approach, but that it would take time to change a mind set. Through staff training, the organization was moving forward rapidly and had established modalities for analysing experiences, sharing this information in the organization and working within regional structures. UNICEF was also sharing experiences of implementation of this approach to programming and development with other partners.

257. In response to the many interventions requesting information on the impact and practical experience in applying the human rights approach to programming in the field, the Director for South Asia spoke about the UNICEF experience in Sri Lanka regarding the use of child soldiers and discussed the demobilization of child soldiers in Rwanda. He concurred with Dr. Goonesekere that in many situations, "quiet consultations" were required, for example, in dealing with the Taliban in Afghanistan. A rights-based approach demanded that the root causes of problems, including how they related to societal norms (criminal law, child exploitation) be examined. The most disadvantaged, not just those who were easiest to reach, needed help. Partnerships were essential in a rights-based approach, and there was a wide range of arrangements for children in South Asia, dealing with such areas as child labour and sexual exploitation. In responding to questions about child labour, the Regional Director stated that it was important to teach children that their work should not be hazardous.

258. The Director for West and Central Africa spoke of children who, in their lifetimes, had never known peace - in Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone, for example. UNICEF was working to reintegrate children with their families and communities, dealing with physical as well as psychosocial problems. The organization played an important advocacy role in mediation and reconciliation. She stated further that the organization was promoting the "Education for Peace" initiative, which was chosen by the Organization of Africa Unity as its theme for celebration of the "Day of the African Child".

259. In closing the discussion of this agenda item, the Executive Director stated that she hoped the Board had found the new format, which was an effort to engage Board members and stimulate dialogue, useful and interesting. She said that comments by delegations on the three reports would be taken into account. There had been visible progress in some programme areas in a relatively short period because resources and political will were in place. She informed the Board that preparations were being made for the end-decade review and that indicators had been defined, and she welcomed Board input in this area. Consultations for the Special Session of the General Assembly had begun and planning for an additional event was under way involving the participation of the private sector and the media.

C. Ensuring children's rights in Africa

260. The Director, Programme Division, introduced the report on "Ensuring children's rights in Africa" (E/ICEF/1999/12). Many speakers congratulated UNICEF for an informative, comprehensive, analytical and action-oriented report, which set out the problems, priorities and responsibilities for Africa's future.

261. A number of delegations noted that the primary responsibility for the realization of the rights of children and women rested with Governments, leaders and the people of Africa. In this regard, some delegations spoke of the need for political will and commitment to resolve the many problems afflicting the continent. The weakening of the State in many African countries was raised as a concern, with a number of delegations mentioning the need to strengthen administration and broaden the participation of women.

262. Numerous delegations spoke favourably of the priority the report assigned to partnerships and cited examples of partnerships between Governments and civil society that had been carried out in their countries. One delegation noted the important role played in this regard in the passage of new national laws promoting the rights of girls and women.

263. The report's call for increased levels of ODA, expansion of the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries initiative, wider debt relief and the channelling of savings from debt relief into the social sectors was supported by many speakers.

264. Delegations welcomed the continuation of Africa as a priority region for UNICEF and noted the increase in general resources allocated to the continent. Support for an increase in staff levels in Africa was voiced by a number of delegations, as was concern regarding the amount of supplementary funding the continent received. In addition to the allocation of more resources to Africa, UNICEF was also urged to intensify advocacy among all partners, including the private sector.

265. Strong support was given to the clear overall priorities established by UNICEF for its two regions in sub-Saharan Africa. The survival of children and improved maternal and child health, together with the continuation of efforts to improve access to quality basic education, especially for girls, were viewed as the right priorities for the West and Central Africa region.

266. Problems associated with the scourge of HIV/AIDS and the spread of malaria were raised by many speakers. The report was commended for clearly setting out the implications of the HIV/AIDS pandemic, and the priority set by UNICEF to help combat the disease was widely supported. One delegation noted that health gains, such as exclusive breastfeeding, were lost as a result of the spread of HIV/AIDS. The issue of the availability of drugs in the treatment of HIV/AIDS was raised by another delegation. It was noted that efforts in the area of HIV/AIDS should be extended to preventive measures in other parts of the continent. In addition, more information on the Roll Back Malaria strategy was requested.

267. Delegations expressed concern about the uneven progress towards the realization of the goals of the World Summit for Children. One speaker commented that the lack of progress was due to the scarcity of resources rather than the absence of political will.

268. The omission in the report of any mention of the protection of children with special needs was noted by one delegation. Linked to the protection issue was the use of child soldiers, and another delegation expressed the wish to have seen a reference to the rehabilitation of child soldiers. Clarification was also sought on the working relationship between UNICEF and the Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict.

269. The issue of collaboration between UNICEF and the Joint and Co-sponsored United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) in Africa was raised. The issue of SWAPs was highlighted, and the secretariat was asked how intersectoral issues, such as HIV/AIDS and holistic, rights-based programming, were dealt with within this approach. It was noted that despite the success of the Bamako Initiative, if children did not have access to health care, they were denied human rights.

270. In response, the secretariat welcomed the breadth and vitality of the discussion, as well as the ideas and suggestions put forward by delegations. It was acknowledged that the HIV/AIDS pandemic was the greatest social catastrophe in history, meriting elevation to a discussion at the highest level of the United Nations. As detailed in the report, UNICEF was giving top priority to the fight against HIV/AIDS. Although breastfeeding was a risk to babies of lactating mothers with HIV/AIDS, breastfeeding promotion should continue.

271. The emergency response of UNICEF to the conflicts in Africa was integrated into the normal programme process, and programmatic adjustments were made through such instruments as the mid-term review. On the issue of child soldiers, the secretariat noted that there was substantial collaboration with the Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict.

272. The secretariat noted that UNICEF was a co-sponsor and partner of UNAIDS, which comprised a number of United Nations agencies and the World Bank. Support

for SWAPs was evidenced by UNICEF participation in sectoral programmes in a number of countries. The sustainability of partnerships was confirmed through the ongoing success of the Bamako Initiative, and UNICEF and the World Health Organization (WHO) would continue to support this initiative.

D. Progress, challenges and future strategies in basic education

273. The Executive Board had before it the report on "Progress, challenges and future strategies in basic education" (E/ICEF/1999/14). In his introductory remarks on behalf of the secretariat, the Chief of the Education Section, Programme Division, provided a brief overview of the report, focusing particularly on the linkage of UNICEF work in education to its work in other sectors. He indicated that the paper sought to provide an updated and coherent framework that reflected the lessons learned from the Education for All (EFA) by 2000 initiative and enabled the UNICEF focus on education to be aligned with emerging global priorities.

274. Many speakers welcomed the report as providing a broad indication of the envisaged strategic direction for UNICEF work in education. A number of delegations, however, expressed the view that such a report to the Board might be somewhat premature, given that the EFA 2000 Assessment had not been completed and that the proposed Global Agenda for Children, which prioritized basic education, was still in the early stages of development. In response, the Chief of the Education Section assured the Board that UNICEF was closely involved in the EFA 2000 Assessment, serving on the Steering Committee and coordinating three of the EFA thematic studies. He stated that the report was intended to provide a coherent overall strategic framework, which would be further refined as the Global Agenda for Children took shape.

275. A number of delegations strongly endorsed the role of UNICEF in supporting basic education, with many commending UNICEF for its focus on girls' education. Some delegations noted with approval the strategy for adolescents, while others welcomed the focus on HIV/AIDS. Two speakers expressed appreciation for the attention given in the strategy to the rights of children affected by crisis or chronic instability, and others commended the work with children with disabilities, although one delegation expressed concern that this appeared to be somewhat "narrow". Several speakers hoped that the stronger focus on ECC and on adolescents would not detract resources and energy from the work on girls' education. A few delegations requested clarification on what impact the strategy would have on sector development programmes, such as SIPs and SWAPs, and two delegations noted the lack of attention to resource issues generally.

276. In response, the secretariat reassured the Executive Board that it had no intention of compromising UNICEF work in girls' education, but would, rather, build on that experience and apply some of the lessons learned to children affected by other factors, such as poverty, remote location, HIV/AIDS, crisis situations and chronic instability. It was also noted that ECC programmes could increase girls' participation by freeing them from child care work and establishing early a pattern of participation in activities outside of the home.

277. With regard to sector development programmes, it was stressed that UNICEF was playing an active role in almost every country where such programmes had been initiated. This involved ensuring that ownership and leadership of the initiatives remained with Governments and that effective linkages were established with other sectors. It was pointed out that through sector development programmes, and in other partnership arrangements, UNICEF was leveraging significant additional resources, while using existing resources more efficiently.

278. The theme of partnerships in education was addressed by a number of delegations, who stressed the importance of ensuring effective collaboration with key multilateral partners, especially the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and the World Bank. One speaker appealed for clearer objectives in partnerships, while others stressed the need for wider partnerships with non-traditional partners, including NGOs, the media

and the private sector. Two speakers called for a clearer and more rigorous analysis of the comparative advantage of UNICEF in relation to its key partners.

279. The representative of UNESCO indicated that the organization was committed to even more effective collaboration in future strategies provided in the new Framework Agreement. She also referred to the forthcoming meeting of the Joint Committee on Education, at which collaboration would be reviewed and discussed in detail. She noted the excellent partnership between UNICEF and UNESCO in playing the leading role in the EFA Assessment and referred to the General Assembly resolution calling for greater collaboration on the United Nations Year for the Culture of Peace. The secretariat endorsed its commitment to effective collaboration with UNESCO and added that collaboration with the World Bank was now reviewed regularly.

280. While a number of speakers commended the report for taking a rights-based approach to education programming, a few expressed concern that the rights perspective was not adequately reflected, and called for more systematic work to ensure that the strategy focused on the full range of rights issues affecting children in education. The concept of the rights-based, child-friendly school was also discussed by a number of delegations, who described the concept as ambitious and costly, although one delegation believed that it was, none the less, realistic. Others suggested that the concept needed further development in the context of rights-based programming. In response, the secretariat assured members that the child-friendly school was intended to provide a focus on the full range of child rights. It was not seen as costly and did not involve a new set of inputs. Rather, it would serve to focus the attention of schools and communities on ways in which child rights could be addressed in the context of the school.

281. A number of delegations raised the issue of decentralization, focusing on the need for a clearer articulation of the role of Governments, local authorities, communities, NGOs and civil society. They stressed the importance of ensuring that decentralization strategies not place an additional burden on the poor. One delegation called for wider attention to the issue of child participation that appeared to be confined, in the report, to adolescents. In response, the secretariat assured members that children's active participation in learning at all levels was a fundamental tenet of the strategy. The importance of the role of central government in giving direction and monitoring progress in a decentralized system was also stressed, as was a concern that decentralization promoted more equitable access, rather than serve as an added burden on poor communities.

282. Numerous delegations expressed the view that the report would require considerable further work and development before it could provide the strategic direction and focus needed. It was suggested that a more systematic analysis of the comparative advantage of UNICEF institutional strengths and more thorough integration of child rights be carried out. In addition, more clearly delineated objectives and measurable outcomes should be identified. In view of this, a number of delegations suggested that the report be tabled for noting only. The secretariat explained that limits to the length of the document necessitated the omission of some of their areas of concern. UNICEF comparative advantage in its intersectoral capacity, its work across the life cycle of the child, its special focus on the excluded and disadvantaged and its substantial field presence at the level of families and communities were elements that could have been more strongly articulated.

283. The secretariat stressed that the report was intended to provide a broad, coherent framework within which different countries and regions could identify priorities. Programme Division was working with field offices to develop more specific targets and outcomes, and these would be crystallized as the EFA Assessment and the Global Agenda for Children took shape. The secretariat thanked the Executive Board for the stimulating and challenging insights which the discussion had brought and assured members that it would seek to incorporate the ideas into the strategy as it developed.

284. There being no objections from the floor, the President confirmed that the Executive Board would take note of the report.

E. Progress report on the UNICEF strategy and investments in information technology

285. The Director, IT Division, gave a presentation on IT in UNICEF, focusing on achievements, challenges and directions. The report (E/ICEF/1999/AB/L.6) had been prepared in response to a request from the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions for a comprehensive office automation strategy, which was made in the context of the Advisory Committee's review of the biennial support budget for 1998-1999 (E/ICEF/1998/AB/L.2). The report had been submitted to the Advisory Committee for review, but the secretariat had been informed that the Advisory Committee would not issue its report for the current session. Comments, if any, would be included in the report on the biennial support budget for 2000-2001, which would be presented to the Board at its second regular session in September.

286. A number of delegations commended UNICEF on the quality of the report and comprehensiveness of the strategy, with one delegation emphasizing the common sense approach in addressing both security and help desk issues. The Director responded that those issues were extremely challenging. Certain provisions for security were being addressed within budget limitations, and the new global help desk function was serving as the basis of information exchange and learning.

287. Several delegations referred to the implications of the use of the Internet and World Wide Web. One speaker expressed confidence that UNICEF would achieve a balance in its use of the Internet for resource mobilization and advocacy purposes. Another speaker drew attention to the issue of consequences for cooperation with National Committees in both practical and economic terms. One delegation expressed an interest for countries to have access to programme documentation currently available on the UNICEF Intranet. In his response, the Director reiterated that Web presence and Internet commerce represented a serious business proposition. He noted that fund-raising through the Web was already producing results. UNICEF was expanding the Intranet environment and documents would be shared externally through the Extranet once they were finalized and in the appropriate form.

288. Several delegations referred to the use of the system of managing for results. Another delegation expressed the hope for submission of improved information to the Executive Board and queried how PROMS would improve capacity to manage programmes, have an impact on accountability and deal with the issue of behavioural change. Concern was expressed about the danger of setting expectations too high. The Director indicated that the potential of the systems would be realized in an evolutionary manner, with leverage of the benefits achieved through training and process improvements, including in the field. The systems would provide real-time information and were designed to reinforce accountability and transparency. The Executive Director concurred that the systems themselves did not provide all the answers, but that they represented an important tool.

289. One delegation referred to the United Nations Integrated Management Information System (IMIS) and requested information on the linkage between organizations of the system and on the use of common systems. In response, the Director acknowledged the challenges posed by different agencies having differing needs. He noted that linkages had both costs and benefits, which needed to be assessed carefully. In this respect, UNICEF had established the lead in implementation of a common agreement for outsourcing of communications, which other agencies were following. UNICEF had opted for the IMIS-human resources module and had provided inputs to the system for the benefit of other agencies. He indicated that the specific requirements of the Private Sector Division and Supply Division were elements governing the selection by UNICEF of other systems for finance and logistics. In the field, PROMS addressed the organization's specific programme needs. The Executive Director added that other agencies had opted for the same commercial software for financial systems as

UNICEF, with the World Food Programme, the International Telecommunication Union and the World Bank currently using it.

290. Reservations were expressed regarding the effectiveness of telecommunications systems in remote locations, and the challenges of Y2K issues for developing countries were highlighted. Information was requested on how UNICEF would sustain its infrastructure. The Director noted that UNICEF had outsourced its telecommunications network and was not running its own network.

291. A few delegations raised the issue of cooperation and data exchange with UNDG. The Director reported that UNICEF had hosted visits from other agencies to review UNICEF information systems, and DevLink was cited as one area where UNICEF was working closely with UNDG on information sharing.

292. One delegation noted that investment in IT required a long-term commitment and encouraged Governments to provide cooperation and support in this regard. The Director concurred with this observation, stressing that technology was not a one-time investment and that there was a need to sustain it with adequate means.

293. A few speakers noted that the report before the Board did not specifically address financial resources, anticipating that this would be reviewed at the second regular session in September, along with the biennial support budget for 2000-2001.

F. Progress report on mainstreaming gender in UNICEF

294. The Chief of the Gender and Programme Partnership Section, Programme Division, introduced the "Progress report on mainstreaming gender in UNICEF" (E/ICEF/1999/13). She stated that the report should be considered within the context of the existing policies of UNICEF, human rights principles, the world conferences and the framework provided by the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, which together strengthened the links between the rights of girls and women. Through effective partnerships with Governments, civil society and other United Nations agencies, progress had been achieved in furthering gender mainstreaming in country programmes. The development and application of tools and programme guidance for capacity-building helped to advance core competencies sustained through the network of gender focal points. The secretariat pointed out that key challenges remained in the practical translation of concepts into actions and in the collection and use of gender disaggregated data, indicators and methodologies for assessing the impact of gender mainstreaming. The document described new opportunities for ensuring the integration of a gender perspective in the emerging focus of UNICEF work in the next century.

295. Many delegations expressed appreciation for the comprehensive and useful report, describing it as a candid and analytical assessment of achievements and areas for improvement. Given the challenges faced in mainstreaming gender in general, and in implementing the Beijing Platform for Action, the achievements described in the report were notable. Some delegations pointed out that UNICEF efforts in the development of the programmer's guide and documentation of best practices were most valuable to programme implementation at the field level. They recommended that UNICEF ensure the wide exchange of information on training methods, research and best practices, within UNICEF and outside, to Governments, NGOs and other agencies of the United Nations system.

296. Several delegations were concerned about the overlapping of gender mainstreaming efforts with those of other United Nations agencies: the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM), in the promotion of women's rights; UNFPA, in relation to adolescents; and UNDP, in relation to the production of tools for gender mainstreaming. The secretariat stated that all agencies were committed to advancing women's rights and gender equality through a variety of international instruments, including the Beijing Platform for Action. Cooperation through UNDAF and the CCA processes, UNAIDS and the Inter-Agency

Committee on Women and Gender Equality had contributed to strengthening gender mainstreaming efforts at the country level.

297. The secretariat explained that the common responsibility of all agencies for advancing women's rights and gender equality strengthened the critical and catalytic role of UNIFEM in two ways: first, because UNIFEM was a relatively small agency with limited resources and outreach; and, second, because mainstreaming implied that whatever its arena of action, each agency should address the gender issue, thereby bringing its particular advantage to the common effort. UNICEF had been able to contribute its extensive global outreach, particularly in relation to actions to support women at the community level and around issues of violence. Furthermore, UNICEF brought to collaboration with UNIFEM and with other United Nations agencies the benefits of an analysis rooted in both a common human rights perspective and a life-cycle approach. This had allowed UNICEF to play a key role in linking children's rights with women's rights, thus demonstrating that there was a need to attend to the rights of girls and gender equality in childhood to support the transformation over time of gender relations in adulthood. At the same time, the role of UNICEF in advancing women's rights was self-evident because the rights of girls were precarious and unsustainable unless the rights of women were advanced.

298. Regarding the work with adolescents, the secretariat clarified that the bulk of UNICEF resources would continue to be allocated to early childhood since no other agency shared that primary mandate or special advantage. However, the life-cycle approach allowed UNICEF to address the needs of adolescents, who were also children and whose needs had not previously been of sufficient concern. UNICEF collaboration with UNFPA in the area of adolescents helped to bring about a shift in the debate and content of actions, which now addressed both reproductive health issues and those related to gender and the rights of girls. FGM, for example, was no longer treated solely as a reproductive health issue, but as one related to the status and rights of girls. In this way, resources allocated to reproductive health were now serving the purpose of promoting children's rights, at little or no additional cost, thus creating efficiencies in resource use.

299. Concerning the production of gender mainstreaming tools by UNDP and other agencies, the secretariat pointed out that there was collaboration at the level of general analysis, and tools were shared and used jointly, as feasible. However, the agencies also had a need to develop and adjust tools to their particular mandate and processes. For example, UNICEF was best placed to develop the necessary guidance for mainstreaming gender in early childhood programmes.

300. Several delegations welcomed the report's emphasis on involving men and boys in achieving gender equality. For example, it was noted that when addressing violence against women and girls, men and boys should be seen not only as part of the problem, but by definition as part of the solution. Along the same lines, in relation to ECC, the role of men as fathers was stressed by some delegations, who noted that institutional capacity-building in this area seemed to be under way. They commended the preliminary initiatives of UNICEF.

301. The secretariat described its ongoing efforts to integrate male involvement. In early childhood care and development, the emphasis was on the socialization of boys and girls for equality and equity, which required the involvement of both sexes and behaviour change among caregivers, parents, teachers and community members. In the areas of quality basic education and programmes for adolescents, attention was being given to the development of life skills education, with a focus on building the self-esteem of girls and their capacity to recognize and protect themselves against the risks to which they are exposed, such as violence, abuse and early parenting, in circumstances where this deprived them of their right to education. Life skills education for boys discouraged negative behaviour patterns and promoted tolerance and equality.

302. Several delegations noted the need for indicators and systematic evaluation of progress achieved in mainstreaming gender in UNICEF country programmes. They commented on the vital importance of having data disaggregated

by sex and age, and recommended that UNICEF work with other agencies to develop more effective indicators of gender mainstreaming in programming. The secretariat responded that country programmes were becoming more specific in reporting achievements, but detailed information in this regard could not be elaborated in the report. It was explained that the gender mainstreaming guide would strengthen the understanding of the need for gender- and age-disaggregated data and their use in the country programme process. These aspects would be considered in the field testing of the guide later in 1999.

303. In general, delegations supported the secretariat's systematic approach to gender mainstreaming through the building of the gender focal point network and the development of tools to support the country programme process. A few delegations inquired about the level of seniority of gender focal points and their ability to access senior management and thus influence decision-making. In this connection, concerns were raised about the "double burden" placed on gender focal points, giving them extensive responsibility for gender mainstreaming in addition to other competing work responsibilities. The secretariat replied that regional gender focal points were generally placed at the P-5 and D-1 levels, but that in country offices, the level varied depending on the size and capacity of the field office. While members of the gender focal point network were highly committed, there was a need to develop common guidelines for the recruitment and appointment of gender advisers in order to secure more consistency in implementation and accountability.

304. Several delegations pointed out that the commitment to gender mainstreaming at senior management levels was critical. One delegation also inquired about the UNICEF strategy to achieve a balance in its resource commitments between women's development and the organization's primary mandate for children. Another delegation asked about gender-sensitive budgeting. The secretariat explained that special attention was given to the development of a coding system to reflect the expenditure of gender-related programmes through PROMS. This would facilitate the more systematic tracking of, and reporting on, the allocation and utilization of resources for gender-related projects.

305. Some delegations inquired about the recruitment and promotion policies for female staff. They sought information about the institutional mechanisms that had been put in place to ensure gender equity within UNICEF. The Executive Director explained that UNICEF was very committed to ensuring a gender balance in recruitment and the allocation of posts. As was the case in other agencies, however, UNICEF was experiencing the loss of young talent, especially of young professional women. A recent study showed that even in the case of families with two wage earners, young women tended to follow their spouses stationed elsewhere. UNICEF was also experiencing a decrease in safe "family duty posts" and an increase in emergency posts, which attracted more men than women. While UNICEF was encouraging women to take up emergency posts, it was difficult to guarantee the safety of their families.

G. Oral report on implementation of the health strategy for UNICEF

306. In response to a request by the Executive Board (decision 1997/9), the Chief of the Health Section, Programme Division, presented an oral report on the implementation plan of the health strategy for UNICEF. He highlighted key areas in which UNICEF had made progress and where work was under way. These included partnerships; prevention of MTCT of HIV/AIDS, prevention of HIV/AIDS in young people; achievement of high immunization and vitamin A supplementation coverage; intensified control of neonatal tetanus; support of integrated community-based approaches to improve child health, nutrition, sanitation and hygiene, including the Integrated Management of Childhood Illness (IMCI); community-based malaria prevention and treatment; poliomyelitis eradication; guinea worm eradication; reduction of maternal mortality and establishment of a system of quality assurance in maternal health; and improvement of young persons' health and development.

307. Several delegations commended the clarity and comprehensiveness of the presentation. They welcomed UNICEF collaboration and partnerships with other

agencies, including WHO, UNFPA, UNAIDS and the World Bank. One delegation acknowledged the comparative advantage of UNICEF in advocacy, monitoring and evaluation, and highlighted UNICEF involvement in SWAPs. He also commended UNICEF for its partnership in the Roll Back Malaria programme and its involvement with the private sector.

308. Addressing the issue of MTCT, one delegation commended UNICEF on its collaboration in countries in this area and on AIDS orphans. He noted that more attention should be directed to monitoring and evaluation of MTCT interventions, as well as to learning from pilot projects, before expanding to a larger scale. Another delegation endorsed the point made on monitoring and evaluation and requested information on the key indicators that have been agreed upon for use in MTCT monitoring. Some delegations referred to the sustainability of supplies, particularly anti-retroviral drugs and breastmilk substitutes, and inquired about the risks associated with replacement feeding in countries where pilot projects were being implemented.

309. In the area of maternal health, developments on minimum standards of care for women during pregnancy were welcomed. On the other hand, concern was expressed about the problem of anaemia in women. A speaker wondered why, with existing methods that were both simple and cost-effective, the goal of maternal mortality reduction had not been achieved.

310. One delegation informed the Executive Board of his Government's joint collaboration with UNDP and UNICEF in establishing the Universal Vaccination Centre, which would contribute to immunization programmes. Another delegation expressed concern about the increased number of cases of tuberculosis in his country that were directly linked to lower immunization coverage. He also raised the issue of environmental problems and requested information on the results of the consultations between his Government, UNICEF and the World Bank. Regarding the increase in the number of cases of tuberculosis reported in Kazakhstan, the Regional Director for Central and Eastern Europe, the Commonwealth of Independent States and the Baltic States stated that this was an increasing concern for UNICEF. He explained further that in collaboration with WHO, UNICEF had a strong programme in support of expanded programme on immunization efforts, and that this would continue. He stated that immunization was a strong aspect of cooperation in the CPR being presented to the Board at its September session. In response to the concern about environmental problems in the region, the Regional Director stated that UNICEF would continue its support and that this issue was also addressed in the upcoming CPR.

311. One delegation requested details on the fight against tobacco use at regional and country levels and inquired about the kind of problems that have arisen in dealing with the tobacco industry.

312. Representatives of WHO and Rotary International made statements on behalf of their organizations. The representative of WHO referred to UNICEF as a key partner in many areas, including immunization, poliomyelitis eradication, measles control, HIV/AIDS prevention, IMCI, nutrition and maternal health. Child development was the newest area of close collaboration between the two organizations. It was noted that hard-won gains in life expectancy and child survival were being wiped out by HIV/AIDS, with 4 million new infections in Africa last year alone. WHO, UNICEF and other UNAIDS co-sponsors were developing a joint plan to support the partnership programme for intensified action in Africa.

313. The representative of Rotary International commented on the organization's human rights approach for women and children, emphasizing three priorities - ECD, education and adolescence. Polio eradication had been their major priority, and over the past 10 years, there had been an almost 90 per cent reduction in the number of cases. The organization was also working with UNICEF in fighting vitamin A deficiency, malaria, malnutrition and guinea worm eradication; improving education and nurturing environments; providing safe water and sanitation; and eliminating landmines. Rotary worked with UNICEF, WHO and national Governments and was now focusing on "children at risk", to address such

needs as education, immunization, safe communities and schools, and the problems of violence and drugs, especially in urban settings.

314. In response to delegations, the Chief of the Health Section emphasized the need for placing more emphasis on the prevention of HIV infection in women, as well as providing better access to voluntary and confidential counselling and testing. Intensive efforts were being made to monitor activities and that UNICEF was planning to cooperate with the United States Centers for Disease Control and Prevention regarding technical advice in this area. He explained that the sustainability of drug supplies depended on how rapidly costs could be reduced. Regarding maternal health, he stated that there was potential optimism regarding technical interventions, particularly in the area of micronutrients. On a fundamental level, however, maternal mortality was not simply a health problem. When whole societies were mobilized to increase the importance of attention given to women, particularly pregnant women, positive results would follow.

315. With regard to the fight against tobacco use, the Chief of the Health Section stated that the partnership in the development of the Tobacco Free Initiative was relatively new. UNICEF, in cooperation with WHO, was developing a policy strategy in this area, was supporting a global youth tobacco survey in a number of countries (including Barbados, China, Egypt, Jordan, Ukraine and Zimbabwe) and had just completed an analysis of the production and marketing of tobacco use through the framework of the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

H. Reports on field visits of Executive Board members

316. The reports on the field visits of Executive Board members to Colombia and Peru (E/ICEF/1999/CRP.8) and to Mozambique and the United Republic of Tanzania (E/ICEF/1999/CRP.9) were introduced by two representatives of the teams. Both representatives described the field trips as an invaluable learning exercise for Board members and recommended strongly that they be continued. They praised the efficient job of field staff and emphasized their dedication and professionalism.

317. One presenter noted that the country programmes were effectively implementing the rights-based approach. What was discussed in a theoretical way at Board sessions was being applied practically in the field. This approach was bringing about a change in attitude and behaviour among Governments. She said that coordination with other United Nations bodies, with Governments and with civil society was well developed and effective, but there was a need for more joint programming and more coordination with agencies outside the United Nations system.

318. She felt that in some cases UNICEF was too reluctant to tout its successes and should concentrate on direct media attention. She also suggested that the mandate of UNICEF was already too broad and perhaps another agency in the United Nations system should be responsible for the promotion of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women. She added that the HIV/AIDS pandemic was no longer a health issue - it was now a development issue.

319. In the ensuing debate, many delegations stated that the reports were of outstanding quality. A number of delegations noted that the shift to an emphasis on capacity-building and advocacy was proving to be effective and should continue. Country programmes were using reduced resources as a catalyst for change, and UNICEF was moving away from services to sustainable potential through effective training.

320. One speaker stated, however, that the very important role in development efforts of her Government, which hosted one of the visits, had not been included in the report. She, and others, said that the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women was very closely linked to the Convention on the Rights of the Child and that UNICEF should play an important role in its promotion.

321. Addressing the issue of joint programming, one delegation stated that in countries she had visited, the mandates of the various agencies were quite different and there was little opportunity for joint programming, although in emergency situations this might not be the case. Another delegation stressed the importance of SWAPs in development assistance.

322. The number of staff members in field offices was discussed. Some delegations felt that streamlining was taking place and should continue, while one delegation requested more information on the number of staff versus workload. Another delegation requested that the Board address the issue of child soldiers in a more comprehensive manner. He also wanted to know the effectiveness of IT on the ground.

323. One delegation noted with concern that one of the field reports contained data that were very different from those contained in the State of the World's Children report and asked for clarification. It was suggested that the field visits be made to field offices where country programmes were being prepared.

324. The Executive Director welcomed the interventions and assured delegations that the issue of statistics would be looked into and corrected. She would also address the issue of timing of field visits.

I. Statement by the Chairperson of the UNICEF Global Staff Association

325. As is usual practice at the annual session of the Executive Board, the President of the Board invited the Chairperson of the UNICEF Global Staff Association (GSA) to address the meeting. She expressed satisfaction that the staff association now participates in the programme and budget review process. She also noted that progress had been made in strengthening the ombudsperson system. She reported that in February 1999, the GSA had launched the National Staff Emergency Relief Fund. She then highlighted areas where she felt improvements were needed.

J. Other matters

326. The representative of the International Labour Organization drew the attention of the Board to a new convention that was to be adopted in Geneva the following week - the Convention to Eliminate the Worst Forms of Child Labour.

327. Two draft decisions - "General resources allocation to Asian countries" (E/ICEF/1999/CRP.10) and "Arsenic contamination of drinking water in Bangladesh" (E/ICEF/1999/CRP.11) - were brought before the Board. After some discussion, and a presentation on arsenic contamination by the Director, Programme Division, it was decided that both draft decisions would be deferred and taken up at the September Board session.

328. At the request of Board members, UNICEF communicated with the Department of General Assembly Affairs and Conference Services on the issue of the late arrival of UNICEF Board documents in languages other than English. The Executive Director explained to the Board that UNICEF worked very diligently to send documents to Conference Services 10 weeks ahead of the Board. At this year's annual session, 3 of 10 documents met the 10-week limit. Four other documents arrived within a week and a half of the deadline. The report of the Executive Director took slightly longer to prepare because of attempts to respond to the request of Board members for a new format and more focused approach. UNICEF was informed by Conference Services that deadlines were not met because of the volume of work it was handling for other United Nations offices.

K. Closing of the session

329. In her concluding remarks, the Executive Director said that the Board meeting had been useful and informative. She noted that it was a good opportunity to examine UNICEF activities and welcomed the guidance and advice of delegations. Because the new millennium would present many challenges, UNICEF was prepared to work with a broader array of partners. She and her colleagues

would continue to respond to requests from Board members for new ways of doing business. She hoped that delegations had found the slightly modified format of the annual session to be beneficial and said that UNICEF would search for opportunities to open debate and to focus more clearly on efforts in the field. She thanked the President for his strong leadership and recognized the work of the Vice-Presidents. She also thanked the interpreters, conference officers and secretariat staff for their fine work.

330. She announced that Cecilia Lotse, Secretary of the Executive Board, would be leaving to take the helm of the Programme Funding Office and that Denis Caillaux would replace her as Secretary. Many delegations expressed their profound appreciation to Ms. Lotse for her work during her tenure as Board Secretary.

1998 UNICEF Staff Awards for Outstanding Service

331. The Executive Director announced the winners of the 1998 Staff Awards, which are presented each year in recognition of exemplary accomplishments. This year, the team approach, which demonstrates the success of collective efforts, was being highlighted. The winners were: the staff of the UNICEF office in Managua, Nicaragua, in recognition of their remarkable efforts in response to Hurricane Mitch in October 1998; the staff of the UNICEF offices in Belgrade, Pristina and Podgorica in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, for their work under extremely difficult circumstances during the Balkan conflict; and the staff of the UNICEF office in Brazzaville, Congo, who worked through extraordinary challenges caused by three armed conflicts over six years.

Part three

SECOND REGULAR SESSION OF 1999

Held at United Nations Headquarters from 7 to 10 September 1999

I. ORGANIZATION OF THE SESSION

A. Opening of the session

332. After welcoming delegations, the President of the Executive Board mentioned an issue of concern to a number of Board members - clarification of the role of the Executive Board in relation to that of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions. The subject merited careful review as the lines of responsibility and accountability between the two might not be very clear or as clear as they should be. He said that Board members needed to begin to think whether any action or formal consideration would be desirable - if not at the present session, then at some time in the future.

333. The President spoke about the importance of the year 1999 as it marked: (a) the tenth anniversary of the adoption of the Convention on the Rights of the Child; (b) the final steps towards the year 2000 goals for child survival, development, protection and participation as emanated from the World Summit for Children; and (c) a year in which the international community was stepping up the pace of planning to set in motion a global movement for child rights in conjunction with the General Assembly Special Session in the year 2001 through the UNICEF Leadership Initiative for Children.

334. In conclusion, he expressed the hope that these deliberations would provide for a real exchange of views between the Board and the secretariat, leading to informed decisions and actions for the promotion of the welfare of the world's children.

335. In her opening remarks, the Executive Director paid tribute to the President of the Executive Board, Ambassador Ibrahim Gambari (Nigeria), who had presided over 1999 sessions with wisdom and a steady hand. Speaking for all of UNICEF, she thanked him for a job well done. She also expressed deep appreciation to Stephen Lewis, who had decided to move on to new pursuits after serving four years as Deputy Executive Director and five years as Special Representative of the UNICEF Executive Director. Referring to his guidance and advocacy role, she acknowledged that he had left "an indelible mark on literally every aspect of UNICEF work".

336. With this being the last regular gathering of the Board in the twentieth century, the Executive Director reminded delegations of the ongoing challenges to child survival and well-being, including the relentless spread of HIV/AIDS and the proliferation of armed conflict and instability. She said that only by renewing and strengthening commitment to goals of the World Summit for Children would it be possible to complete the child survival agenda set in the 1990s, and that UNICEF would need the active and generous support of all of its partners which would be mobilized through the organization's Leadership Initiative for Children as the Special Session of the General Assembly in 2001 approached. At the annual session, she had outlined the major elements of a proposed new global vision for children, and she would report on the concrete steps that must be taken to start putting that far-reaching vision into effect, including steps Board members would be able to take, during the session.

337. She reported on evidence of accelerated progress towards the World Summit goals, including a new initiative - the Global Alliance for Vaccines and Immunization (GAVI) - involving, among others, UNICEF, the World Health Organization, the World Bank, various foundations, bilateral donors and the private sector, which aimed at promoting immunization and vaccine development in low-income countries where child mortality rates remained high. She also detailed developments in other areas.

338. In closing, the Executive Director reminded delegations that "in serving the best interests of children, we serve the best interests of humanity" (see E/ICEF/1999/CRP.13 for the full text of her statement).

B. Adoption of the agenda

339. The agenda, timetable and organization of work of the session, as contained in documents E/ICEF/1999/15 and Corr.1, was adopted. The agenda contained the following items:

Item 1: Opening of the session: statements by the President of the Executive Board and the Executive Director

Item 2: Adoption of the provisional agenda and timetable and organization of work

Item 3: Oral report on decisions taken by the Economic and Social Council

Item 4: Financial medium-term plan (MTP) for the period 1999-2002

Item 5: Biennial support budget for 2000-2001

Item 6: Revised Financial Regulations and Rules of UNICEF

Item 7: UNICEF support to the United Nations General Assembly Special Session on Follow-up to the World Summit for Children in 2001

Item 8: Proposals for UNICEF programme cooperation

Item 9: Report on the seventh meeting of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)/UNICEF Joint Committee on Education (JCE)

Item 10: Report on internal audit activities

Item 11: Report on follow-up to recommendations of the United Nations Board of Auditors and the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions

Item 12: Financial matters:

(a) UNICEF interim financial report and statements for the year ended 31 December 1998, the first year of the biennium 1998-1999

(b) Private Sector Division (PSD) financial report and statements for the year ended 31 December 1998

Item 13: International Child Development Centre (ICDC)

Item 14: Programme of work for 2000

Item 15: Other matters

Item 16: Closing of the session: remarks by the Executive Director and the President of the Executive Board

340. In accordance with rule 50.2 and the annex of the Rules of Procedure, the Secretary of the Executive Board announced that 71 observer delegations had submitted credentials for the session. In addition, two United Nations bodies, four specialized agencies, two non-governmental organizations (NGOs), three National Committees for UNICEF and Palestine had submitted credentials.

341. He also commented on the translation of Executive Board documents. Although all the documents had been translated by the start of the session, he acknowledged that some had been very late, and assured delegations that the secretariat took the matter very seriously. The secretariat, he said, would work with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations

Population Fund (UNFPA) and the United Nations Department of General Assembly Affairs and Conference Services on improving the situation.

II. DELIBERATIONS OF THE EXECUTIVE BOARD

A. Oral report on decisions taken by the Economic and Social Council

342. The Director of United Nations Affairs and External Relations reported on the decisions taken by the Economic and Social Council at its substantive session of 1999 that had direct implications for UNICEF as an individual operational agency and as a member of the United Nations Development Group (UNDG) and the Executive Committee on Humanitarian Affairs. These decisions also had implications for the Executive Board.

343. The high-level segment focused on employment, poverty eradication and the empowerment of women - themes of great relevance to UNICEF. The Executive Director of UNICEF had participated in the panel for the tenth anniversary of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, in the Dialogue with Heads of Agencies on Operational Activities, and in the formal high-level discussion where she presented a statement on girls' education.

344. The Director noted that in the high-level dialogues, there was a strong convergence of views among United Nations agencies, the Bretton Woods institutions and Governments on such fundamental issues as poverty eradication, the rights-based approach and the importance of social development. The United Nations funds and programmes were requested to translate recommendations into concrete actions. It was acknowledged that heads of United Nations agencies, members of the Executive Boards and government representatives needed to appeal to the highest level of donor Governments to acquire adequate resources.

345. A key input to the discussions was a consolidated list of issues related to the coordination of operational activities prepared by the UNDG. Operational activities' resolutions highlighted key issues, including: giving priority to poverty eradication; supporting national Governments; strengthening data banks and poverty assessments; developing indicators related to poverty eradication; making greater use of United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) and Common Country Assessment (CCA) instruments and the resident coordinator system; conducting joint evaluations under government leadership; and supporting capacity-building. Governments were recognized as having the prime responsibility in development and coordination.

346. The Council outlined priorities of the comprehensive triennial policy review, including: documentation for the Council's substantive session in 2000 on the subject of funding, highlighting voluntary contributions, reasons for the decline in core resources, linkages between structural and managerial changes, and resource mobilization; actions to harmonize operational procedures; information on the integration into programmes of cross-cutting themes; and the goals of the international conferences.

347. The Director noted that this was the second year that there was a segment on humanitarian assistance, an important aspect of UNICEF work. The UNICEF Executive Director had participated in a high-level panel with the World Food Programme, UNDP, the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs and the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies. The Council called for further efforts towards a coherent approach to relief, rehabilitation, reconstruction and development. It expressed concern about the erosion of international humanitarian and human rights laws, including deliberate violence against children. The Council highlighted the vulnerabilities of children and adolescents in armed conflict, and urged specific provisions for children in peace agreements and efforts to demobilize, reintegrate and rehabilitate children who have been used in armed conflict.

348. The Council urged co-sponsors of the United Nations Joint and Co-sponsored Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) to complete the development of "institutional strategies" and to submit to governing bodies their proposed contributions to the United Nations System Strategic Plan for HIV/AIDS for 2001-2005. The Secretary-General was invited to set system-wide goals for the mobilization of Member States, and the conclusions and recommendations of a report of the

Secretary-General requested for the substantive session of 2001 should be submitted to the governing bodies of UNAIDS co-sponsors.

349. Implementation and follow-up to United Nations initiatives on African development were key aspects of the Council's deliberations. Future areas of emphasis should include education, health, HIV/AIDS, poverty eradication and social development.

350. One delegation suggested that oral reports to the Executive Board be circulated as advance copies to enable delegations to participate in discussions and to facilitate interaction.

B. Financial medium-term plan for the period 1999-2002

351. The Deputy Executive Director introduced the financial MTP for the period 1999-2002 (E/ICEF/1999/AB/L.11). She noted that the present plan showed an increase in regular and other resources as compared to the previous year's plan. It envisaged a modest average annual growth in income of 4 per cent, which was conservative when compared with the funding target of 7 per cent annual growth endorsed by the Board at its first regular session in 1999 (E/ICEF/1999/7 (Part I), decision 1999/8). The gap between the targets would be bridged through enhanced support from Governments and the private sector, as outlined in the resource mobilization strategy (E/ICEF/1999/5).

352. She stated that the plan's estimates of income and expenditure were realistic targets, but that today's funding environment was extremely challenging. She expressed appreciation to all donors, highlighting the work of the National Committees in 1998. She asserted that with the support and guidance of the Board, UNICEF would be able to achieve the targets outlined in the financial MTP.

353. Several delegations commended the secretariat for its concise and clear document and presentation. They expressed satisfaction with the 1998 income performance, which exceeded the MTP projections, and endorsed the current income projections as coherent and realistic. One delegation expressed concern about the large gap between the financial plan and funding target, and called for a review of the funding target of 7 per cent annual growth in income. Another delegation stated that the 7 per cent growth in income in 1998 gave ground for optimism that donors would make it possible to achieve the target. One delegation stated that although the income projections appeared to be realistic, it would have been more prudent to assume a 3 per cent annual growth in income throughout the plan period.

354. Some speakers stated that the MTP played a strategic role in the multi-year funding framework (MYFF). One delegation expressed concern that only a few donors continued to provide the bulk of UNICEF resources, and suggested that assisted Governments be encouraged to share in the burden. Noting that the largest increase in 1998 income had come from the private sector, another delegation called for additional efforts to increase contributions from under-performing government donors.

355. Several delegations said that the planned increases in programme expenditure and reductions in the support budget were positive developments which they hoped would continue in the future. One delegation felt that the planned increase of 19 per cent in programme expenditure in 1999 appeared to be large compared to 1998 and asked if this would be achievable by the end of the year. Other delegations asked why total expenditure was lower than planned in 1998. The secretariat responded that the 19 per cent increase in 1999 programme expenditure was based on an expected increase in 1999 income and carry-over to 1999 of more than planned income received in 1998. Lower than planned expenditures in 1998 were a result of lower than anticipated programme implementation in some countries and lower support budget expenditure owing to higher vacancy rates in the first year of the 1998-1999 biennium budget. The impact of the devaluation of local currencies and carry-over of some activities to the second year of the biennium also had an effect.

356. Two delegations asked why the cash balance was high at the end of 1998, while another wanted to know the monthly UNICEF cash flow requirements. Another delegation called for increased expenditure to utilize the year-end cash balance and anticipated growth in funding. The secretariat replied that the year-end cash balance was high because other resources, which make up the bulk of the balance, were received towards the end of the year and earmarked for implementation in the following year. Cash requirements, which fluctuated depending on the period of year, were estimated to be an average of $80 million-$90 million per month.

357. In response to a query about what the impact of the changing value of the United States dollar had been on income received thus far and on income expected during the remainder of the year, the secretariat responded that although it was hard to predict the future value of the dollar, performance to date indicated that this year's income would not be adversely affected. (See the annex, decision 1999/10, for the text of the decision adopted by the Executive Board.)

C. Biennial support budget for 2000-2001

358. Deliberations on the biennial support budget for 2000-2001 (E/ICEF/1999/AB/L.7) and on the report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions on the budget (E/ICEF/1999/AB/L.10) were opened by the Executive Director. She highlighted the essential strengthening of personnel in key functions in the areas of programme, evaluation and planning, emergency operations, information technology (IT), and the reinstatement of the third Deputy Executive Director at the level of Assistant Secretary-General (ASG). The proposed posts were key for the realization of four primary functions of the secretariat: (a) to provide strong global leadership in all programme areas to accelerate progress for children globally; (b) to respond rapidly to the changing global environment of new technologies with increased coordination and enhanced decentralization; (c) to further enhance the resource base; and (c) to provide leadership for United Nations reform. The Deputy Executive Director reviewed specific comments on the support budget, as contained in the Advisory Committee's report, and thanked the Committee for the many favourable comments.

359. The Comptroller presented an overview of the support budget process, its results and its relation to the MTP. She explained how the support budget process was one of the building blocks in managing for improved performance and results. All offices had been requested to look for savings to stay within a no-growth budget. They were also asked to identify and prioritize risk areas as well as areas of opportunity linked to the achievement of office management plan (OMP) priorities. Regional and headquarters offices were required to prepare OMPs with specific goals and measurable objectives that corresponded to major areas of action in the MTP.

360. The Comptroller also summarized the main results of the budget proposal: (a) the gross support budget for 2000-2001 was real no growth - 3.4 per cent more than the 1998-1999 support budget and within the inflation rate of 3.8 per cent; (b) the net support budget was zero nominal growth at $493.5 million, the same as 1998-1999 and 1996-1997; (c) the support costs had been reduced from 26.6 to 23.8 per cent of the total resources; (d) regular programme resources were increased by $141.0 million; and (e) total resources to be managed increased from $2.345 billion to $2.662 billion.

361. All delegations addressing this agenda item expressed satisfaction with the tangible improvements in the budget document and welcomed the efforts made to accommodate specific requests from the Advisory Committee and the Executive Board. Specific mention was made of the inclusion of annexes on global staffing and the PSD budget. Many speakers welcomed the reduction and containment of support costs at 23.8 per cent and the efficiency gains of $13.5 million. Several of them still found the percentage high compared to other organizations, but observed that the IT investments were starting to pay off. The Deputy Executive Director explained that the percentage of support costs was calculated on the budget for total funding. In this respect, UNICEF was not completely comparable to UNDP, which projected a higher growth in "cost sharing" in other

resources contributions, thus making its base throughput much higher and its support cost ratio lower.

362. Some delegations proposed that the secretariat include a long-term view of budget trends, with accounts of results of the previous budget period in future budget documents. They expressed a need to be better equipped to see the evolution of budget proposals, and to better understand which post adjustments were lasting and which would increase or decrease in the future. They were interested in gaining a long-term perspective on the staffing policies of UNICEF. In this context, one delegation asked whether the secretariat would be willing to discuss the budget assumptions before initiating the budget process within UNICEF. The Deputy Executive Director responded that within the framework of the MTP and a MYFF, the secretariat definitely supported the proposal to discuss the strategy for support budget preparations in informal sessions in the future.

363. There was widespread support for the budget philosophy of ensuring maximum resources for country programmes. Several speakers specifically appreciated the increased commitment of UNICEF to country programmes in Africa. One delegation questioned the reduction of posts and budgets in the South Asia region, which had the greatest number of children living in poverty. The Deputy Executive Director explained that all country and regional support budgets were based on the needs in the countries as contained in the country programme management plans (CPMPs) and were carefully reviewed by regional directors with regional and staff representatives at regional programme and budget reviews.

364. It was noted that staffing was the key area of investment for UNICEF. Many speakers concurred with the proposed strengthening of selected headquarters functions and expressed the hope that the addition of posts would be in areas geared towards further enhancing efficiency at headquarters and, thus, would not affect the overall trend towards decentralization. A few speakers questioned the balance of posts between headquarters and field offices, and suggested that increases in the number of posts at headquarters should be avoided. One delegation summed up this issue in stating that "no growth" was not a result, but a "means to an end". The same speaker suggested that the discussion should focus on results instead. The Comptroller had explained in her overview that although many post changes were proposed throughout the organization, the overall ratios of posts among headquarters, regional offices and country offices had not changed.

365. The overall increase of international Professionals and decrease of General Service staff were noted. The Executive Director and the Deputy Executive Director both commented on the reasons for continuing modifications of the ratio of support staff to Professional staff. Over a number of years, the ratio of secretaries to Professional staff had been reduced, and now UNICEF was also seeing the impact of changes in technologies and communications. Some speakers supported UNICEF looking to the future by increasing entry-level Professional posts. One delegation promised to support the recruitment of Junior Professional Officers from developing countries in the future.

366. The Deputy Executive Director explained the purpose of the five new posts in the Programme Funding Office (PFO) in relation to the resource mobilization targets. Some delegations requested clarification of the correlation between staffing of PFO and contributions to core resources. Other delegations observed that the current funding environment was very competitive and that results and outcomes would justify the new posts. In response, the Deputy Executive Director gave an example of how one additional staff member, on loan to PFO, had been able to generate new and untapped resources. She also confirmed that one of the new posts would be dedicated to help field offices develop fund-raising strategies. She explained the increasing need to meet the decentralization efforts of donor countries. Therefore, the increased assistance to field offices from PFO would indeed be in line with UNICEF decentralization efforts.

367. Many speakers were supportive of the proposed third ASG post, but requested a more detailed explanation of the division of work in the Executive

Office and individual responsibilities. Some delegations indicated that strengthening in the programme area would be supported, and specifically requested that one of the three ASGs come from a developing country. Other delegations questioned how the substance of Change Management would be managed in the future. The Executive Director replied that, subject to the approval of the Secretary-General, it was her intention to try to fill at least one of the Deputy Executive Director posts with an excellent candidate from a developing country. The abolition of the D-2 post did not mean that UNICEF had reduced its commitment to Change Management; rather, excellence in management today was built into the organization.

368. The recommendation of the Advisory Committee - to use the same terminology as other funds and programmes, and to change "Special Accounts" to "Trust Funds" - was discussed. Some delegations asked whether there would be implications for UNICEF in changing the name. The Deputy Executive Director said that the terminology "Special Accounts" was adopted by the Executive Board when, on the advice of the United Nations Office of Legal Affairs, the UNICEF Financial Regulations and Rules were approved in 1987 and endorsed by the Advisory Committee since UNICEF operated somewhat differently from the other agencies. Some delegations also wanted to be informed about advantages and disadvantages of establishing an operational reserve for UNICEF, as recommended in the Advisory Committee report. To this, the Deputy Executive Director proposed that UNICEF would undertake an analysis as recommended by the Advisory Committee.

369. During the discussion of the 1998-1999 budget (E/ICEF/1998/AB/L.1 and Corr.1), UNICEF was requested by the Board and the Advisory Committee to review the recovery methodology and report on it in the 2000-2001 budget. The Executive Board approved an interim policy of 5 per cent at its second regular session in 1998 (decision 1998/21). This policy had been in force for almost a year. The Comptroller explained how other resources programmes in UNICEF typically funded the expansion of already existing regular resources programmes, which meant that the incremental support budget costs to manage these additional funds were low. She recommended that the current methodology and 5 per cent rate should continue to be used during the coming biennium.

370. Many aspects of the recovery policy were subsequently discussed. Several delegations needed reassurance in recommending a recovery policy that would be able to cover the actual costs incurred. One delegation found the percentage of indirect support too high. Some speakers could not accept the basic theoretical methodology in which the imputed interest earned on other resources cash balances was used as an offset to total variable costs. Some delegations expressed an interest in a review of the recovery policy being presented at the January 2000 session. The Deputy Executive Director responded that it would be practically impossible for UNICEF to undertake a comprehensive analysis and prepare a new report in time for review by the Advisory Committee before the January 2000 session. After further internal consultation, the secretariat confirmed that the recovery policy would be put on the agenda of the first regular session of 2001.

371. The Comptroller reviewed the Advisory Committee recommendation on the treatment of tax reimbursement costs. The definitions expressed in the recommendation bore directly on the matter of redirecting contributions from Member States to offset tax reimbursement costs included in the gross support budget. UNICEF did not have the authority from the Executive Board to use the proposed methodology. If UNICEF were to use the methodology, the resource plan in table 1 of the budget document would be revised to show a reduction of $15.8 million in regular resources income. Some delegations expressed support for charging tax reimbursement costs against the voluntary contributions. The Executive Director affirmed the need for the Executive Board to give UNICEF the authority to follow this procedure.

372. Questions concerning the status of common premises services were raised and answered by the Deputy Executive Director. Savings attributed to common premises and services had not been itemized in the budget proposal as the project was still in development, and investments would be needed before savings

could be incurred. Currently, only UNICEF had a reserve set aside for common premises. (See the annex, decision 1999/20, for the text of the decision adopted by the Executive Board.)

D. Revised Financial Regulations and Rules of UNICEF

373. The Deputy Executive Director introduced the report on amendments to the UNICEF financial regulations (E/ICEF/1999/AB/L.9), along with the report to the United Nations Board of Auditors and the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (E/ICEF/1999/AB/L.8). She explained that the report on financial regulations contained a number of amendments that UNICEF referred to as "housekeeping" changes, arising mainly as a result of budget harmonization. She noted that one of those changes responded to the Board of Auditors recommendation on "cash assistance as an expenditure", and that it was the revision of this definition, as per Regulation 8.6, that was questioned by the Advisory Committee. The definition, as changed, conformed to two accepted standards: (a) the definition of "programme" from budget harmonization; and (b) the definition of "expenditures" from United Nations accounting standards. The Deputy Executive Director noted that this definition was consistent with all other proposed changes in the paper and should be adopted with the others.

374. Support was expressed for the amendments to the financial regulations. A number of delegations welcomed the establishment of a working group to review the regulations in greater detail and to look into more far-reaching changes. One delegation noted that lessons could be learned from the experiences of UNDP in this area.

375. Concern was expressed regarding Article IV, Regulation 4.4, and it was requested that the working group consult with Board members on this issue. The delegation also expressed concern about Article XII and suggested a limit for ex-gratia payments that could be made by the Executive Director without consultation with the Board. Several delegations requested additional explanations, particularly on cash assistance and the difference between UNICEF and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and UNFPA operations, which would justify the proposed amendment to Regulation 8.6.

376. One delegation expressed concern regarding the treatment of cash assistance as expenditures, namely, that the performance rate on programme implementation was artificially increased; that the justification of the actual disbursements on the cash assistance could not be obtained at the time the accounts were closed; and that the nine-month period given by the secretariat for the submission of accounts was rather lengthy. Another delegation expressed concern regarding the present recovery charge on other resources income, and indicated that the use of interest income in offsetting support costs was inappropriate. The delegation suggested that the working group look into this during the review of the financial regulations and rules.

377. The Deputy Executive Director explained that UNICEF provided certain types of assistance, namely, supply assistance, technical assistance and direct cash assistance, the composition of which was agreed upon in lengthy discussions between Governments and UNICEF, before master plans of operation were signed by the two parties. She explained that in the case of supply assistance, which was provided based on a detailed plan of activities, the ownership of the supply transferred to the Government at the time the goods were procured by UNICEF. At that time, the expenditure was recorded. The provision of cash assistance was also based on a detailed plan of activities for the government programme or project. Similarly, the ownership of cash given for assistance was transferred to the Government at the time the cash was provided. The Deputy Executive Director noted that this was how UNICEF had implemented national execution for many years. She further explained that UNICEF was not an executing agency and that, unlike UNDP, did not use the services of other agencies.

378. The Comptroller informed the Executive Board that UNICEF had held consultations with UNDP when the amendments to the financial regulations were being discussed, and that collaborative efforts were ongoing. In responding to

the concern regarding the use of interest income to offset cost, she explained that according to UNICEF regulations, interest income must be applied to miscellaneous income that goes to general resources. When UNICEF stated that the interest was used to offset the recovery, the interest was used as a calculated amount to decrease the amount of funds that needed to be recovered for the costs of managing other resources. UNICEF recorded interest as general resources income and used the amount of interest income earned to calculate the recovery rate. The Comptroller reminded the Executive Board of the report on the recovery policy (E/ICEF/1998/AB/L.6), which detailed the methodology of calculating the rate. She also indicated that informal sessions with the Board would be held to discuss the analysis of the data.

379. The Comptroller also noted that the report on amendments to the financial regulations related to the revision of regulations that specifically concerned the harmonization of budgets, methodology, terminology and definitions. The proposed amendments covered the definition of "programme expenditure", which also responded to a recommendation of the Board of Auditors. Hence, while the changes in the regulations related to harmonization, in this case, Regulation 8.6 also related to United Nations accounting standards. She indicated that when the proposed amendments were approved, the Board of Auditors could then assess whether UNICEF had carried out the recommendation regarding cash assistance. UNDP and UNFPA had already revised their financial regulations. (See the annex, decision 1999/21, for the text of the decision adopted by the Executive Board.)

E. Report on follow-up to recommendations of the United Nations Board of Auditors and the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions

380. The Deputy Executive Director introduced the report (E/ICEF/1999/AB/L.8) and explained that it reviewed implementation by UNICEF of the recommendations of the Board of Auditors and the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions in their report A/53/513 on the UNICEF accounts for the biennium 1996-1997. The report also discussed the status of the implementation of the recommendations of the Board of Auditors on the accounts for the biennium 1994-1995.

381. The Deputy Executive Director expressed appreciation for the useful recommendations and advice of the Board of Auditors and the guidance and advice of the Advisory Committee. She noted that there had been substantial follow-up to the recommendations. She did not review each of the points in the report in detail, but focused on the issue of "cash assistance as an expenditure". She noted that in its report for the biennium ended 31 December 1995, the Board of Auditors had recommended that the administration review the policy of recording cash assistance to Governments (CAGs) in line with the provisions of the financial regulations and the policy manual on accounts. The Deputy Executive Director indicated that UNICEF had implemented this recommendation during the ensuing biennium by conducting a review of accounting standards and related programme policies and procedures.

382. She explained that the results of the review that were communicated to the Board of Auditors confirmed that UNICEF had been consistent since 1969 in its policy of recording cash assistance, but that a financial regulation adopted in 1988 to define "programme expenditure" was confusing and hard to interpret. UNICEF further advised the Board of Auditors that to rectify this situation, it would evaluate and update, as appropriate, the financial regulations generally for review by the Advisory Committee and consideration by its Executive Board. UNICEF would also conduct a similar analysis with respect to its financial rules, policy manuals and instructions.

383. The Deputy Executive Director emphasized that UNICEF placed a great deal of importance on the resolution of the issue of cash assistance as an expenditure - not only for technical accounting reasons, but also because it played a significant part in the organization's programmes of cooperation with Governments. She explained that CAGs provided funds to Governments to support programme implementation in countries where UNICEF cooperated. The payment of

the funds by UNICEF was taken as an expenditure because the ownership of the funds transferred to the Government at the time payment was made. The cash assistance was part of a master plan of operation that detailed what activities would be undertaken by the Government and supported by UNICEF. Giving up ownership of the funds constituted an important element in the relationship UNICEF enjoyed with Governments.

384. She further explained that after payment was made, it was the responsibility of UNICEF to assure that the funds were used for the purpose intended. UNICEF required that Governments account for the utilization of this assistance by providing appropriate documentation.

385. Some delegations expressed their appreciation for the steps taken to address the issues raised by the Board of Auditors and the Advisory Committee. In particular, one delegation took note of the actions of the secretariat with regard to the Auditors' recommendations on CAGs and compliance with procedures for the recruitment of consultants. The delegation suggested, however, that since encouraging National Committees to ensure prompt payment had not been effective, the interest payment provision on late remittances as recommended by the Auditors should be used. Delegations also raised the question of specific actions taken by the secretariat in relation to the fraud cited in the report, and proposed that the responsible staff be identified, that the disciplinary action taken be spelled out and that all UNICEF staff be notified of cases of fraud to remind them that such conduct would not be tolerated.

386. The Comptroller stated that UNICEF took cases of fraud very seriously. Each case was reported to three senior-level individuals in the organization and was followed up at the highest levels. The specific case referred to in the report of the Board of Auditors concerned a case for which UNICEF sought external legal and auditing advice in-country. It was determined that the organization could not make a case against the individuals. On the issue of notifying staff, the Comptroller explained that due process must be observed and required a rather lengthy period. Confidentiality regarding staff involved had to be maintained until resolution of the cases. (See the annex, decision 1999/11, for the text of the decision adopted by the Executive Board.)

F. Oral report on the multi-year funding framework

387. It was noted that at the first regular session of the Board in January, in decision 1999/8 on the resource mobilization strategy, the Board had requested the Executive Director to propose at the first regular session in 2000 a plan on the timing of the presentation to the Executive Board of the various elements of the MYFF, with a view to enhancing their interlinkages. The Board further requested the Executive Director to make oral reports to the Board at its remaining sessions in 1999 about progress in the preparation of the proposals made in this regard.

388. The Executive Director stated that the MYFF had four elements: (a) duration and nature of the MTP, as well as timing of presentation to the Board, and timing of presentation of the financial MTP and biennial support budget; (b) content and format of the annual report of the Executive Director and feasibility of making available reports relating to the achievement of results - all presented at the same time to the same Board; (c) the nature and timing of analysis of availability of resources and feedback on consultations with Governments on regular resources mobilization to predict and know as early as possible availability of resources; and (d) the role of the country note with regard to the CCA and UNDAF.

389. She noted that there had been steady and significant progress since the annual session in June. A cross-divisional working group had examined relevant Board decisions and provided a set of recommendations, which had been reviewed by the New York Management Team and would shortly be reviewed by the Global Management Team (GMT). Consultations had been held externally as well, with UNDP and UNFPA, to benefit from their experiences with the MYFF.

390. She drew the attention of Board members to the timeline that had been prepared, emphasizing that the plan would not be finalized until Board input had been considered. She noted that the discussion on the biennial support budget at the second regular session would be taken into account and that she intended to initiate informal consultations with Board members. Finally, she reiterated her strong commitment to the MYFF as a way to increase resources to UNICEF-assisted programmes for children and to further strengthen the solid partnership of the Board and the secretariat for the progressive realization of children's rights.

391. The Comptroller then presented the timeline for planning, budget and reporting that had been distributed to delegations. She stated that the chart showed linkages of the support budget to the MTP, country notes and country programme recommendations (CPRs). It was a visual representation of linkages of all UNICEF plans, budgets and reporting systems. The chart covered a three-year period - 1998-2001. It contained organizational priorities and the financial framework, which influenced development of the budget guidelines, which in turn created the budget for 2000-2001.

392. She explained that a number of internal procedures had been implemented in UNICEF to ensure that the objectives of the budget were realized: preparation of OMPs by regional offices and at headquarters; open forums for all staff to discuss plans; and preparation of CPRs and CPMPs. These inputs were then consolidated into the budget submitted to the Advisory Committee in May 1999; this became the budget that was before the Board. She drew the attention of delegations to other elements, which indicated feedback to and influences on these other events.

393. Many delegations expressed their appreciation for the thorough presentations of the Executive Director and the Comptroller. They welcomed the upcoming informal consultations. One delegation asked how UNICEF would measure its performance and noted that there was a distinction between drawing up linkages and processes and the substantive issues around performance management. It was further queried how UNICEF would integrate reporting on objectives with its own reporting on financial issues. It was suggested that UNICEF hold meetings with UNDP to learn from their experiences and that the UNDP MYFF be used as a template. Another delegation asked when the MYFF would be introduced and if it would replace the MTP process. He stressed that programme countries must "own" the MYFF, so that it did not become a top-down process.

394. The secretariat response to delegations was presented at an informal meeting on the MYFF held during the Board session.

G. UNICEF support to the United Nations General Assembly Special Session on Follow-up to the World Summit for Children in 2001

395. The Executive Director introduced the report on UNICEF support to the United Nations General Assembly Special Session on the follow-up to the World Summit for Children in 2001 and additional events (E/ICEF/1999/17). She stated that the Special Session was an opportunity to review achievements of the World Summit goals and to determine what remained to be done. She asked Board members to help make the event meaningful in order to generate maximum benefits for children. She stressed that it was at the national level that support needed to be galvanized. UNICEF would be supporting Governments, in particular through the multiple indicator cluster survey process. She expressed appreciation to the "initiator" countries - Canada, Egypt, Mali, Mexico, Pakistan and Sweden - which were sponsoring this effort.

396. Numerous delegations highlighted the importance of the follow-up to the World Summit and expressed their support to UNICEF to coordinate the review of the World Summit goals. A number of delegations stated that, at this juncture, it was important not only to review the past, but also to consider actions for the future. UNICEF needed innovative strategies and ideas to achieve the World Summit goals. One delegation stated that the future agenda should include maternal and neonatal health, breastfeeding and birth spacing, and should take

into account such new challenges as HIV/AIDS and the issue of AIDS orphans, violence and children in armed conflict.

397. Another delegation stated that regional meetings were to be held to galvanize support. Many delegations expressed the wish to see increased collaboration within the entire United Nations system. The Special Session should be organized to allow full participation as the World Summit for Children had 10 years before. The participation of children and youth, as well as other partners, including bilateral donors, NGOs, the private sector and the media, was welcomed. Delegations applauded the Leadership Initiative for Children. Two delegations suggested, however, that the Leadership Initiative for Children be called the Partnership Initiative for Children. Another delegation queried the use of the term "youth" and requested clarification.

398. Delegations appreciated the fact that UNICEF informed the Executive Board of its intentions, but stressed that the organization needed to share the time schedule of the review and the process leading up to the Special Session. Many speakers expressed the wish to avoid a heavy preparatory process. UNICEF should benefit from already planned and existing global and other follow-up meetings, as well as such meetings as the NGO Forum in Seoul this year.

399. A number of delegations emphasized that data collected during the reviews must be accurate and objective and that data analysis should highlight problems as well as solutions. Further information was requested on the nature of the additional events and the specific role of UNICEF and National Committees. The representative of the Standing Group of National Committees expressed support for the effort, and stated that there was an important link between historical opportunities and resource mobilization targets.

400. Speaking on behalf of the six initiator countries, the delegation of Sweden provided details on their efforts to date in connection with the Special Session, in particular a draft resolution that would be presented to the General Assembly at its fifty-fourth session. They appreciated the transparent participatory process and invited other countries to join in supporting UNICEF.

401. Delegations endorsed the start-up funding requested, but it was noted that UNICEF should have included this funding in the biennial support budget, as this activity was foreseeable. Most delegations expressed their support for the draft decision; however, one delegation noted that the amount being requested was high and asked if additional resources would be required.

402. In response to interventions by delegations, the Executive Director stated that UNICEF supported national data collection and was working to ensure accuracy of data, but emphasized that it remained the responsibility of Members States, which must take the lead. She stressed that the Special Session was not simply a meeting, but was, rather, the basis for a global Leadership Initiative for Children. She noted that the Convention on the Rights of the Child defined a "child" as anyone under the age of 18 years, but that teenagers preferred to be called "youth".

403. UNICEF was working to involve more actors and develop concrete actions for children. This broader alliance would build on what had been accomplished at the World Summit. The United Nations system as a whole would participate, and an agency briefing was already planned for the end of September 1999. UNICEF was actively engaging the participation of local, national and international NGOs, the private sector and the media.

404. In order to avoid a heavy preparatory process, UNICEF would take advantage of the meetings and review processes already planned. UNICEF was appreciative of the role of the initiators, and would engage and inform the Executive Board in the process. Specific information was still being formulated on the additional events. The importance of national and regional events were also noted. (See the annex, decision 1999/12, for the text of the decision adopted by the Executive Board.)

H. Proposals for UNICEF programme cooperation

405. The Director, Programme Division, provided an overview of the CPRs proposed for Executive Board approval. He drew attention to the "round-up" document (E/ICEF/1999/P/L.16 and Corr.1), which summarized the CPRs for the session. The CPRs were the outcome of substantial preparations, led by government partners, and often involving a range of non-governmental and civil society organizations. The policy formulation process had also benefited from consultations with and inputs from bilateral and multilateral partners, as well as from enhanced levels of cooperation and partnership with United Nations sister organizations. He highlighted a number of features that were common to the CPRs and drew the Board's attention to some of the major obstacles to the realization of children's and women's rights. He outlined how the country programme strategies and major activities found in the CPRs sought to deal with the fundamental and complex threats to children's rights and well-being. The priority country-level efforts would be supported by region-wide or subregional programmes, as well as by major new initiatives such as GAVI. In closing, the Director confirmed that efforts had been made to reflect the key comments made in Board discussions on UNICEF programmes in recent years, and particularly on the country notes considered at the January 1999 session.

406. There were no comments from delegations.

West and Central Africa

407. The Board had before it for consideration two full-length CPRs, for Cape Verde (E/ICEF/1999/P/L.9/Add.1) and Niger (E/ICEF/1999/P/L.10/Add.1; and two short-duration programmes, for the Democratic Republic of the Congo (E/ICEF/1999/P/L.21) and Sierra Leone (E/ICEF/1999/P/L.22). In her introductory remarks, the Regional Director for West and Central Africa highlighted the very difficult situation facing children and women in the region, with increases in acute poverty and suffering due to violence and prolonged armed conflicts. Child labour was also identified as a serious problem. Despite limited progress made in some countries, children's and women's rights were not yet included in the national policies for sustainable and equitable development. She reported on lessons learned from previous programme of cooperation. The main objective of the proposed programmes of cooperation before the Board was to achieve the goals of the World Summit for Children.

408. One delegation noted that the political situation in Niger was changing, with presidential elections planned for November. It was expected that the new programme would benefit from the restoration of democratic institutions and increased collaboration with civil society.

409. Commenting on the CPR for the Democratic Republic of the Congo, a speaker suggested that, in view of the likelihood of continued instability, a three-year programme might not be appropriate. The same delegation found the programme budget of $65 million relatively high for a three-year programme. The question was raised as to how the lack of government support in the areas of health and education would be resolved. The Regional Director responded that adjustments would be made during the annual reviews, and that community organizations were expected to play a key role, within the context of the Bamako Initiative strategy.

410. The proposed activities related to the demobilization and reintegration of child soldiers in the country programme for Sierra Leone received strong support from several delegations. One delegation reaffirmed its commitment to increase its financial support to UNICEF activities in that area in view of the existing good collaboration between partners at the field level.

Eastern and Southern Africa

411. The Executive Board had before it for consideration a full-length CPR for Zimbabwe (E/ICEF/1999/P/L.8/Add.1); two short-duration recommendations, for Botswana (E/ICEF/1999/P/L.17 and Ethiopia (E/ICEF/1999/P/L.19); one

recommendation for funding for a short-duration country programme and for additional general resources to fund the approved country programme for Burundi (E/ICEF/1999/P/L.18); and a recommendation for supplementary funding for Uganda (E/ICEF/1999/P/L.20). In his introduction, the Regional Director for Eastern and Southern Africa reaffirmed that HIV/AIDS and malaria had been identified as top priorities for UNICEF support in the region. Four of the programmes, excluding Uganda, had integrated the priorities for action in this area and generally reflected the same overall strategy - a combination of advocacy, social mobilization and community capacity development, within a human rights framework.

412. Two speakers complimented UNICEF for its collaborative efforts in Zimbabwe and urged that they continue. In that connection, special mention was made of the involvement of the Government, UNICEF, donors and UNAIDS in community development activities. In commenting on the increasing incidence of HIV/AIDS infection, the delegation of the country said that it would take time to reverse the trend.

413. With regard to the CPR for Botswana, one delegation commended UNICEF for innovative initiatives such as Molaletsa (a private sector project), which could serve as an example of best practices for possible replication. While supporting efforts to reduce mother-to-child transmission of HIV/AIDS, the same delegation cautioned that it might be more cost-effective to focus on heterosexual transmission as it represented the most common method of transmission. The delegation advocated for a regional approach to HIV/AIDS prevention and treatment, and expressed the view that the Government should assist with programme development and design. Efforts to reduce the number of pilot projects was welcomed by one delegation, while another speaker acknowledged that the programme made good use of the limited resources. The Regional Director acknowledged that it seemed like a broad programme with relatively little funds. However, UNICEF could not wait for additional funds to focus on HIV/AIDS. Any additional funding would strengthen general resources.

414. Speakers voiced strong support for the Ethiopia CPR. Many delegations noted the difficulties in programme execution, and welcomed the close coordination with UNDP and UNFPA. One delegation recognized the vital role of joint programme planning between UNICEF and the Government, adding that government ownership must be ensured while taking into account any special circumstances. Support for the continued participation of UNICEF in sector development programmes was also expressed. One speaker commented on the lack of reference in the document to measures being taken for the reintegration of children into schools, while another noted that there was no mention of the UNICEF response to children in armed conflict. He also wanted to know what UNICEF was doing about the rights of boys not to be recruited or involved in de-mining activities. Acknowledging that the social conditions were very serious, the country delegation said that the Government had taken steps to provide an enabling environment and collaborated well with UNICEF. The speaker raised the issue of allocation to core programmes and cross-sectoral costs, adding that UNICEF had assured that the issue would be resolved shortly as a joint technical team was working on the funding.

415. In response, the Regional Director agreed that the issue of how UNICEF was dealing with conflict in Ethiopia was not explicitly addressed in the document, explaining that some UNICEF actions had been incorporated in the programmes. He was pleased to hear that collaboration between UNICEF and the Government of Ethiopia had entered a phase of strength, and he assured that together they would work on fund use. On the issue of armed conflict, he said that it was evident in the UNICEF Anti-War Agenda and the Graça Machel study, among others. UNICEF planned to increase its support in this area and use an existing Regional Office post to increase its focus on orphans.

416. One delegation commented on the good quality of the Burundi programme which was based on the needs of the country, although he questioned the duration of only one year. The country delegation expressed his Government's appreciation

for the efforts of UNICEF and others in the country. However, he strongly objected to the cessation of international financial aid to the country.

417. On the Uganda CPR, the country delegation applauded UNICEF for recognizing the key areas needing support. The Government, he said, was committed to achieving the national programme of action.

418. In addressing the CPRs from the region, the representative of UNAIDS complimented UNICEF on fully recognizing the reality and scale of the situation concerning HIV/AIDS as well as on the actions being taken, especially in the most seriously affected countries of Botswana and Zimbabwe. He questioned the lack of an HIV/AIDS prevention programme in the Uganda CPR. He added that Uganda had established "best practices" and the information should be shared with others. He was pleased to see that UNICEF and UNAIDS were working closely together. On the issue of sharing lessons learned from Uganda, the Regional Director cited the strategies of advocacy, social mobilization, community capacity-building and the centrality of youth as emanating from experiences in the region as well as in Uganda. UNICEF was also facilitating exchange visits.

419. The Executive Director responded to several of the issues raised. Regarding the lengths of the programmes, she explained that traditionally programmes covered a five-year period. However, in countries experiencing unstable conditions, UNICEF tried to ensure some continuity of programming for a term that allowed for normalcy and that took into account the flexible period (around three years). The one-year programme in Burundi aimed at harmonizing programming cycles with other United Nations agencies and building stability. To keep the Board up to date on the UNICEF response to children affected by armed conflict, the Executive Director reported that the thrust of UNICEF was to mainstream emergency interventions into regional programming. In many instances, this would focus heavily on the emergency, but basic services would be continued.

Americas and the Caribbean

420. The Regional Director for the Americas and the Caribbean presented four short-duration country programmes - Colombia (E/ICEF/1999/P/L.23 and Corr.1), Guyana (E/ICEF/1999/P/L.24), Haiti (E/ICEF/1999/P/L.25) and Paraguay (E/ICEF/1999/P/L.26) - and a recommendation for supplementary funding for a subregional programme for countries in Central America affected by Hurricane Mitch (E/ICEF/1999/P/L.27). He emphasized that the primary reason for the preparation of the short-duration country programmes was to harmonize programme cycles with those of other agencies. It would also allow more time to prepare longer-term programmes of cooperation that were more responsive to the changing situations. Concerning the proposal for Central America, the Regional Director emphasized the psycho- and socio-cultural aspects of the reconstruction, so often ignored in physical reconstruction efforts.

421. Referring to the Haiti CPR, the country delegation suggested that contacts should be facilitated between the country's medical staff and specialists in other countries in order to promote primary health care. He hoped that the changing political climate in the country and the fact that the Government had put children at the top of its national agenda would make it easier for UNICEF to carry out its programme of cooperation. He suggested that UNICEF be more selective in its choice of NGO partners because of some problems encountered. The Regional Director noted that while the political climate had been difficult and had hampered assistance by many agencies, UNICEF had been able to establish good relations with the Government and was working effectively with civil society organizations with which there had been prior consultation and agreement with the Government.

422. Several delegations suggested that the programme needed to be strengthened. In view of the high prevalence of HIV and the weak state of medical waste management in the country, the programme should build in resources and activities to ensure that vaccinations were administered with due attention to universal precautions. UNICEF should consider providing special health and

nutritional assistance to children of tuberculosis patients since this group ran a much higher risk of becoming infected with HIV.

423. Another delegation felt that the objective of 90 per cent immunization coverage was unrealistic, given the current 30 per cent coverage level, and questioned whether the UNICEF office had the capacity to implement such an ambitious programme with an allocation of $11 million over two years. The same delegation expressed reservations about the proposal to broaden the coverage of the urban health programme, which seemed to be encountering difficulties. He suggested consolidating existing activities before considering further expansion. The Regional Director stated that Haiti needed more resources than it had recently obtained. He said that although the immunization goals were ambitious, they were not unrealistic. He felt that it was essential to bring Haiti's coverage up to that of other countries in the region.

424. Concerning the Guyana CPR, the country delegation noted that despite great economic burdens, her country had achieved the goal of 20 per cent expenditure on social services. Guyana had also made notable progress in many of the World Summit goals, but faced a particular problem in its lack of human resources, hence the request for a continuation of cooperation with a focus on advocacy, policy strengthening, health, nutrition, basic education and integrated area-based development. The transfer of skills to community groups and delivery of basic services through capacity-building had been of particular benefit to the country's indigenous Amerindian communities.

425. One delegation noted that community participation and gender mainstreaming were essential elements of the effort to strengthen democratic processes and institutional capacity in Guyana. However, it was felt that the proposed programme might be too ambitious given the amount of resources available and the lack of benchmarks to monitor progress. The development of indicators was necessary to prepare the longer-term programme of cooperation.

426. Several delegations called for more attention to be given to the growing problem of HIV/AIDS in both Guyana and Haiti. The representative of UNAIDS supported the statement, especially in the case of Haiti, where the plans to focus on mother-to-child transmission and the general area of prevention were appropriate. However, one speaker questioned the need to support operational research on HIV/AIDS transmission in Haiti. Another delegation described the Caribbean as often being in denial with regard to the pandemic, and unless action was taken, the situation would worsen.

427. The Regional Director stated that both Haiti and Guyana were part of a regional communications initiative that UNICEF was implementing with UNAIDS support, which focused primarily on youth. The positive results achieved had been applied throughout the region. He agreed that there was a need to look at the problem more broadly to avoid the disaster that had hit other regions. UNICEF was committed to ensuring that the pandemic would be given high priority in all country programmes, working closely with UNAIDS and other partners.

428. Commenting on the objectives of the Paraguay CPR, the country delegation said that they were designed to develop actions in a participatory and decentralized manner in line with current national policies in health, children in general, adolescents and reproductive health. These aimed for greater impact on the quality of life through better coordinated efforts. The empowerment of communities to manage health programmes and identify their needs and lines of action was essential, and Paraguay had been able to do this with UNICEF support.

429. Several delegations commended the proposal on Central America as being an appropriate response, combining efforts to remedy the hurricane damage with prevention and social action initiatives. Predicting such disasters and alleviating their effects by reducing social vulnerability were essential objectives of the programme. Another delegation commended UNICEF efforts to coordinate interventions with other partners. There was, however, a need to avoid overlap, and UNICEF was encouraged to work closely with the special committees that had been formed in several countries to coordinate work on

disaster mitigation. The delegation commended the effort to identify and document best practices in disaster prevention and to establish a regional coordination mechanism to track progress of national and regional efforts, and offered to support missions to work with United Nations agencies in these activities.

430. In response, the Regional Director stated that there was a good coordination mechanism on the ground. There were national plans of action in all the countries affected by Hurricane Mitch. The challenge in Central America in the years to come would be to have a good subregional integration mechanism to support the interventions that have a multi-country dimension.

East Asia and the Pacific

431. As there were no country programme submissions from the East Asia and Pacific region for the current Board session, the Regional Director provided some highlights of programme developments in the region and shared some observations of general interest on the work of the Regional Office.

432. He reported that, despite the difficult times, the Regional Office had managed to "do more with less". It had been possible to strengthen UNICEF country offices in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Fiji, Mongolia and Papua New Guinea with minor adjustments in other country offices as well as in the Regional Office.

433. Although the region was still coping with the repercussions of the economic crisis, UNICEF advocacy had mobilized Governments to keep their promises to achieve the goals of the World Summit for Children. The Regional Director highlighted some success stories of innovative activities at the subregional level in such areas as HIV/AIDS, roll-back malaria and trafficking of girls and women, which had produced value-added benefits to the participating countries.

434. Private sector fund-raising had produced good results in countries such as the Philippines and Thailand, demonstrating public support and appreciation for the credible work of UNICEF. Encouraged by this, plans were under way to expand both corporate and private sector fund-raising efforts to countries such as China and Malaysia.

435. The Regional Office had commissioned a study on the status of child rights in the 10 Member States of the Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN) in the hope that the study would heighten awareness of the need to be proactive not only to the atrocities such as those in East Timor, but also to other less publicized but real deficiencies in fulfilling the rights of children in several ASEAN countries.

436. The Regional Director also addressed the issue of the continued trend of increased military spending even after the end of the cold war and the need for UNICEF to help countries build a culture of non-violence and to continue to advocate for a "first call for children".

437. There were no comments from delegations.

South Asia

438. The Regional Director for South Asia introduced the short-duration country programme for Afghanistan (E/ICEF/1999/P/L.28). The complex situation in the country was characterized by continued armed conflict, discrimination against women, deterioration of child survival and development, limited social services infrastructures and Taliban edicts restricting the rights of girls and women. The new country programme, which had been developed within the overall coordination of the United Nations system and was guided by the principles of the United Nations Strategic Framework for Afghanistan, was clustered around the themes of survival, development and protection.

439. In light of queries about the role of regional offices, the Regional Director briefed the Board about the three core functions of the Regional Office which added value to the work of the country offices in the region. They included: (a) management support to and oversight of country offices and programmes; (b) support and technical assistance to a country offices in terms of programme development, implementation and assessment; and (c) regional advocacy and outreach to help Governments put children's issues high on their political agendas through collaboration with the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) through professional networks and regional initiatives such as "Investing in Children". He also informed delegations about a few of the themes that would be pursued in all country programmes, as well as in regional activities.

440. There were numerous interventions on the country programme for Afghanistan. Expressing satisfaction with the quality of the CPR, delegations recognized the unstable programming environment under which UNICEF had to operate and agreed with its programme approach of being flexible, creative and innovative, and able to be adapted to changing situations. One delegation in particular was pleased with UNICEF efforts in developing the new programme based on lessons learned. Positive mention was also made about the dedication of UNICEF staff working in the country in spite of the security constraints. Speakers also expressed satisfaction with the organization's strong support of the rights of children and its intolerance of discrimination against women and girls, especially its collaboration with SAARC on the girl child.

441. A number of speakers expressed concern about the continued discrimination against women and the impact of the Taliban edict on women's employment and requested additional information on the possibility of positive programme results under these circumstances. They also requested more concrete information on the UNICEF policy dialogue with the Taliban to convince them to honour their commitment; community-level action to realize the rights of women and children; alternative channels to ensure equal opportunity of education for both boys and girls; staff security; collaboration with NGOs; and the collaboration framework, e.g., with UNESCO on education.

442. The well-coordinated programme preparation and process was appreciated, and one delegation informed the Board of the participation of the Islamabad office in drafting the programme which had also involved other United Nations agencies, the International Committee of the Red Cross and NGOs. The same delegation was pleased to note UNICEF efforts to increase its field presence and expressed the view that opportunities for doing more existed.

443. The delegation of the country commented that the Government in exile was still recognized as the sole representative of a sovereign State and that the continued discrimination against the rights of women and children had been further complicated by the continuing conflict. The same speaker also noted the need for UNICEF to cover areas under Government control, including establishing maternal and child care centres, and to relocate the UNICEF Afghanistan office. Another speaker addressed the issue of the regional priorities, and agreed with the regional plan to focus on the areas of nutrition and education.

444. The Regional Director responded that although UNICEF recognized the difficulties in working in Afghanistan, there were examples which indicated that achievements were possible, especially at the community level, such as home-based schools. Even within the Taliban itself, some individuals were more flexible than others; they allowed UNICEF to work for girls, which provided windows of opportunity for effectively implementing UNICEF programme activities.

445. He explained that regional coordination bodies had been set up in Afghanistan and that the gradual return of staff would be possible by early 2000. UNICEF had been trying to increase its staff on the ground under the new programme, and would work where it could if security permitted. UNICEF had worked in the North Alliance Territory in the areas of education and immunization, but the activities had been suspended and would be resumed if the security situation improved. UNICEF was trying to increase its programme

presence in the country, but would operate within the overall United Nations strategic framework. He reiterated the determination of UNICEF to work with SAARC on the regional priorities and particularly for the next Decade of Child Rights (2001-2010).

446. The Executive Director added that insecurity was a reality of UNICEF work. Its programme response needed to be realistic and flexible. She also mentioned UNICEF efforts to work with the rest of the United Nations system, and said that she had been asked by the Secretary-General to represent the United Nations at the recent donor group meeting in Afghanistan. There was a sense that the process of the strategic framework, which promoted close working relationships among agencies in different areas, had been put in place. She also expressed the hope for the early return of all Professional staff, irrespective of nationality. In response to the Regional Director's comment about changing circumstances, she agreed to keep the Board informed of any significant changes in the programme.

Central and Eastern Europe, the Commonwealth of Independent States and the Baltic States

447. The Executive Board had before it full-length CPRs for Armenia, Azerbaijan, Romania and the Central Asian republics and Kazakhstan (E/ICEF/1999/P/L.12/Add.1-E/ICEF/1999/P/L.15/Add.1, respectively), as well as a recommendation for a short-duration multi-country programme for Central and Eastern Europe, the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) and the Baltic States (E/ICEF/1999/P/L.29). The Regional Director stated that the transition process continued to bring rapid, positive changes, but sustaining quality services for children and adolescents was extremely difficult. He noted the growing incidence of substance abuse, sexually transmitted diseases and HIV/AIDS among young people. He also highlighted the programme preparation process, adding that in all programmes, special attention was given to the incorporation of children's rights. He briefly described UNICEF activities in emergency preparedness and response in the region.

448. One delegation asked why countries had been grouped into a multi-country programme, when one country, in particular, merited a CPR of its own. He stated that the "lessons learned" section in the document should be more specific, and UNICEF should identify more measurable outputs, both qualitative and quantitative. The CPR seemed to be driven more by activities than by strategic initiatives. He suggested that UNICEF draw on local expertise and work with other agencies and organizations to ensure coherence of efforts. Social exclusion of minority groups should be handled in an integrated manner, through improving social policies.

449. The Regional Director replied that UNICEF had submitted a multi-country programme because the organization was committed to a cross-country approach to maximize use of resources and because most countries in the region did not have country offices and were managed from Geneva. Regarding the need to identify more specific outputs, UNICEF took this issue seriously and would follow up on the use of more extensive data.

450. One delegation commended the important work UNICEF was carrying out in his country in the following areas: establishment of an office of ombudsman on the rights of the child; assistance to families in difficult situations and to street children; education of disabled children; and early childhood health. He expressed the hope that UNICEF would continue to assist women and children in a balanced manner throughout the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia.

451. A number of delegations stressed the importance of continuing to support children who had suffered from the accident at Chernobyl, which had economic, medical, social, psychological and ecological consequences.

452. One delegation commended UNICEF for technical and financial assistance for activities related to the elimination of iron deficiency, and welcomed the conference of salt producers to be held in Ukraine at the end of September. It

was noted that because of limited resources in the region, effective resource allocation was extremely important. In this regard, UNICEF should take into account of the results of analyses and recommendations made by other United Nations agencies, particularly the UNDP Human Development Report. Support was expressed for the move towards common premises and services, but care must be taken because centralizing resources could, in some instances, decrease assistance to mothers and children.

453. It was noted that the Regional Office brought under one umbrella countries that did not necessarily belong in the same group. The Regional Director responded that the Executive Board had chosen to group countries of Central and Eastern Europe, the CIS and the Baltic States in one geographic region. On the issue of salt iodization, he said that UNICEF was committed to working to change legislation and increase political support.

454. In commenting on the CPR for the Central Asian republics and Kazakhstan, the delegation of one of the republics commended UNICEF for its extraordinary work with children's establishments in mountainous areas and other areas that were difficult to access. He hoped that UNICEF would be cooperating with UNESCO on the International Decade for a Culture of Peace and Non-violence for the Children of the World, and in preparing for the International Year of Mountains, the year 2000. He also expressed support for the Vaccine Independence Initiative.

455. On Kazakhstan, the country delegation noted with satisfaction that the CPR stressed the importance of developing a national education monitoring system to respond to increasing numbers of primary school drop-outs. She welcomed the move by UNICEF to devise area-wide and country-specific evaluation activities to reflect social priorities and the consequences of transition. He commended UNICEF on strategies in the severely degraded environments of the former nuclear test site in Semipalatinsk and in the Aral Sea basin, and stated that the dangers of natural and man-made disasters could be reduced through preventive strategies and the use of sectoral approaches. He thanked UNICEF for its support to the international conference on the rehabilitation of the Semipalatinsk region, which had been held in Tokyo on 6-7 September.

Middle East and North Africa

456. The Executive Board had before it a full-length CPR for the Islamic Republic of Iran (E/ICEF/1999/P/L.11/Add.1). In introducing the report, the Regional Director for the Middle East and North Africa stated that the country programme focused on applying the principles of rights-based programming to the particular situation of the country in an effort to make a difference in the lives of Iranian children. The programme of cooperation had been developed in a participatory manner and addressed such issues as reducing disparities and improving the quality of services. The prevention of malnutrition was of particular importance, as it was an unachieved goal of the country. In addition, children in need of special protection, including refugee children, would benefit from close cooperation with local authorities to ensure that the best interests of the child were taken into account in all decisions.

457. The participatory manner of the conceptualization and design of the CPR for the Islamic Republic of Iran was commended by the country delegation. He also confirmed his Government's commitment to strengthen cooperation with UNICEF to address such challenges as malnutrition and the reduction of disparities in achieving the goals of the World Summit for Children. He called on the international community to contribute resources to strengthen participation at the grass-roots level and address the needs of refugees in his country.

458. See the annex, decision 1999/13, for the recommendations approved by the Executive Board.

Intercountry programmes

459. The Director, Programme Division, introduced the report on intercountry programmes (E/ICEF/1999/P/L.30), which comprised proposals for general resources and supplementary funding for project development and advocacy at global and regional levels; programme implementation on a multi-country basis; and the Emergency Programme Fund (EPF). This was the first year that such a report had been prepared, as these programmes had traditionally been included under category 4 of the biennial support budget. They had been separated as a result of the budget harmonization process and in line with recommendations of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions.

460. The proposed advocacy and programme development budget for UNICEF headquarters would continue to be used to address priority issues in the context of the MTP for 1998-2001. Regional-level programmes to be funded from general resources and supplementary funding were strategically selected to respond to the priority needs of children and women. Regional approaches added value to individual country programmes, which remained the centre-piece of UNICEF cooperation. The intercountry provisions in the document also provided a framework for the receipt of future supplementary funding in cases where donations were provided for a priority thematic area. EPF enabled quick response to emergency situations.

461. One delegation expressed support for the intercountry programmes, but stated that allocation to child protection remained low in some tables. He requested further information on UNICEF plans to integrate this important area more widely into its regional programmes. The report did not specify international partners for planned regional activities, and in the area of sector-wide approaches (SWAPs), the document contained no plans for global or regional initiatives to explore the role of UNICEF. He was pleased that UNICEF plans for almost all regions included work to protect adolescents, women and infants from HIV/AIDS.

462. Another delegation said that the document was helpful to donors in understanding the importance of supplementary funding, but that budgeting of these funds must be realistic. She asked for information on how the budgets were established, how they would be elaborated in future, and how general resources and supplementary funding worked together to support UNICEF programmes.

463. In response, the Director, Programme Division, said that child protection was an area of growth at all levels in UNICEF. Tables 1 and 2 of the report indicated flexibility and permitted the use of resources for priorities, including child protection, which, along with early childhood development, cut across many sectors, including children in armed conflict. UNICEF was a committed and active partner in SWAPs, actively collaborating with donors and a consortium of bilateral and multilateral organizations to design more effective approaches to sector-wide development. He stated further that the document allowed flexibility, and that it requested authority from the Executive Board to raise supplementary funds. He took note that the organization must be more realistic in raising funds and in mapping requirements. The Executive Director added that UNICEF would strive to be more concrete, particularly regarding the headquarters sector, and agreed that improvements could be made to the document. (See the annex, decision 1999/14, for the text of the decision adopted by the Executive Board.)

I. Report on internal audit activities

464. In presenting the report on internal audit activities (E/ICEF/1999/AB/L.14) to the Executive Board, the Director of the Office of Internal Audit (OIA) emphasized that increased resources had enabled OIA to expand audit coverage. He explained that over 80 per cent of the office's efforts had been devoted to the audit of field offices, and in 1998, 38 per cent of field offices had been audited. This was greater than the target of 30 per cent that had been set.

465. Based on these audits, the overall conclusion reached was that the standard of internal control in UNICEF was better than that observed in 1997. The report singled out cash assistance to partners as an area where improvement was clearly evident and noted some of the many good practices found. However, it also drew attention to areas of weakness and actions that needed to be taken. Local management had accepted 92 per cent of 1,700 recommendations made, and the Director observed that offices acted swiftly to implement changes.

466. Several delegations commented that the high acceptance rate of recommendations reflected well on the quality of the recommendations made. As requested by the Executive Board in 1998, this second report on audit activities provided more analysis of those areas in need of improvement. Delegations welcomed the frank analysis and transparency in the report, and drew attention to recommendations they thought to be of particular importance: the need for clarity of programme objectives; increased field monitoring visits; strengthened supervision of the work of consultants; and the need to place greater reliance on the audit services of programme partners. They hoped that the secretariat would take action in these areas.

467. One delegation asked that more detail and quantification be provided in future reports. The Director drew attention to the quantification that had been provided in the report, but took careful note of the request. Another delegation asked if audits of regional offices were carried out. The Director stated that such audits had begun, and the results would be included in the report submitted to the Board in 2000.

468. Another delegation asked what measures were taken when recommendations of OIA were not accepted. The Director said that offices had to respond within two months with supporting documentation. OIA would then provide feedback and, in some cases, follow up on the ground. One delegation asked that more data be included in future reports on cost savings and recovery. Concern was expressed about the number of vacancies in OIA. The Director stated that all positions had now been filled.

469. In concluding, the Executive Director expressed satisfaction with progress made by OIA in repositioning the audit function within UNICEF in the last three years. She said that audit functions were taken seriously in UNICEF. OIA was well respected and worked closely with management in developing the actions needed to strengthen management practices and controls within the organization. (See the annex, decision 1999/15, for the text of the decision adopted by the Executive Board.)

J. Report on the seventh meeting of the UNESCO/UNICEF Joint Committee on Education

470. The President of the Executive Board presented the report on the seventh meeting of the UNESCO/UNICEF JCE held in New York on 17-18 June 1999 (E/ICEF/1999/18). The meeting was an important illustration of the inter-agency collaboration called for in UNDAF. (See E/ICEF/1999/CRP.15 for the President's report on the meeting.)

471. Delegations addressing the Executive Board welcomed the report and the evidence of increased and more focused collaboration with UNESCO. A number of delegations commented on the areas of special focus that had been agreed upon, including girls' education, education in emergencies, education statistics and the special focus on Africa. One delegation suggested that HIV/AIDS should also be an area for increased collaboration, while another expressed concern that the approach to early childhood care (ECC) should not focus solely on pre-schooling, which tended to benefit the more privileged sections of the population. Several delegations urged that in the follow-up to the Education for All (EFA) Framework Agreement, greater clarity be established on the respective strengths of each organization to ensure an efficient division of labour.

472. A number of delegations asserted that collaboration between UNICEF and UNESCO should involve more systematic collaboration with bilateral donors and

NGOs, while one delegation expressed concern with regard to the Global Action Plan (GAP) referred to in the report. All delegations welcomed the recommendation that future reports provide more specific, results-oriented accounts of collaboration, with examples of successful initiatives.

473. In his response, the President thanked delegations for their helpful comments and assured the Board that the secretariat would address the issue of more systematic assessments of the collaboration for the next report. The Executive Director noted that collaboration between the two organizations was increasingly taking place at the country level. She explained that the GAP proposal, to which reference had been made, had been subsumed by the ongoing discussions on the EFA Framework Agreement. UNICEF and UNESCO were involved in these discussions with other EFA Forum conveners, sponsors and NGOs. She stressed that the UNICEF approach to ECC focused particularly on community- and home-based care to ensure that it reached the children most in need. (See the annex, decision 1999/16, for the text of the decision adopted by the Executive Board.)

K. Financial matters

UNICEF interim financial report and statements for the year ended 1 December 1998, the first year of the biennium 1998-1999

474. The Deputy Executive Director introduced the interim financial report and statements for the year ended 31 December 1998, the first year of the biennium 1998-1999 (E/ICEF/1999/AB/L.12). She explained that the report was an interim report. She provided highlights of the financial statements and indicated that these were also covered under discussion of the financial MTP for the period 1999-2002. There were no comments by delegations. (See the annex, decision 1999/17, for the text of the decision adopted by the Executive Board.)

Private Sector Division financial report and statements for the year ended 31 December 1998

475. The Director, PSD, presented the financial report and statement for the 12-month period ending 31 December 1998 (E/ICEF/1999/AB/L.13). It was the division's first full 12-month reporting period following the change in fiscal year reporting. He pointed out that the overall goals for the division had been met. Although greeting card sales continued to be sluggish, fund-raising far exceeded expectations, thanks in part to the excellent performance of National Committee partners. He was optimistic about the direction PSD was taking, especially in the area of brand development, innovative collaboration with media and corporate supporters, and enhanced creative and technical support offered to sales partners.

476. One delegation noted with satisfaction the increase in net income over the amount budgeted, but requested more information on how this was accomplished. She expressed concern about the continued slow growth of PSD sales. She appreciated the explanation given by the Director in his presentation, but would have preferred that the information had been included in the report before the Board and not reported on during the meeting. She asked what other factors beside a strong dollar had caused the drop in gross sales proceeds. Regarding the increase in net proceeds from public sector fund-raising, she asked what the distribution was among major donors. On factors behind trends suggested in the report, she stated that the Board needed more information in the next report. The report of PSD should look and read like an annual report of a private corporation.

477. A number of delegations thanked the National Committees for their remarkable work and stated that they were among the most important contributors to the success of PSD. One delegation stated that it was necessary to find a balance between the economic constraints that National Committees must cope with and the objectives for growth in resources set by UNICEF. He requested more information on how individual National Committees performed. Regarding the gross proceeds of sales, the delegation had understood that diversification would add

to sales, but he noted that this was not visible yet and wondered whether it would be in the future.

478. In his response, the Director stated that it had been more difficult to rekindle the greeting card part of the organization than to further support fund-raising efforts. The joint planning process was an important innovation, and PSD had to look at more aggressive means of marketing, including the Internet. With regard to gross proceeds, he said that the strong dollar had been a detriment, but that the yen was now showing signs of strengthening vis-à-vis the dollar. This would help, however, only as far as sales in 1999 were concerned. He agreed that UNICEF needed to be more sales and distribution oriented, and that the organization currently relied heavily on volunteers and direct mail.

479. The representative of the Standing Group of National Committees stated that the joint planning process was an essential mechanism for two-way communication between National Committees and all divisions of UNICEF, not just PSD. National Committees, he said, were looking at new and exciting ways of private sector fund-raising.

480. The Executive Director added that National Committees played an incredible role in fund-raising, and more broadly as well. The world was a more competitive one, and UNICEF would take advantage of new opportunities. The joint planning process, although not yet perfect, had moved the engagement of different partners to a higher level. (See the annex, decision 1999/17, for the text of the decision adopted by the Executive Board.)

L. International Child Development Centre

481. The Director, ICDC, introduced the progress report and proposed activities for 2000-2002, as contained in document E/ICEF/1999/16. She stated that the year 1998 marked the tenth anniversary of ICDC, and that the report before the Board took stock of the Centre's decade-long contributions to the work of UNICEF. ICDC was the only part of UNICEF devoted to research, to building the capacity of staff and partners, to expanding knowledge of children's rights, and to examining issues with a North-South perspective encompassing all children. She reported briefly on some of the important contributions of Centre and on future activities.

482. Many delegations expressed their support for the focus on human rights and independent research on children. They stressed that children's rights should continued to be the primary focus area for UNICEF and supported the future directions of the Centre in the areas of poverty and problems of developing countries. It was noted that the Regional Monitoring Reports (MONEE) were extremely useful to ministries of health in Central and Eastern Europe, the CIS and the Baltic States, in particular in the area of capacity-building.

483. It was felt that the expansion of the International Advisory Committee membership to include other donors and eminent international experts was a significant development. It was important for ICDC to expand cooperation because of its limited staff and budget. It was noted that the Centre must remain independent and have high academic standards.

484. One delegation suggested that the Centre examine other studies being conducted on child labour. In the area of child participation, a delegation requested information on the work the Division of Evaluation, Policy and Planning (EPP) was doing in this regard. The Director replied that the area of child participation was a very important one and was being examined by both ICDC and EPP. The Centre was working on a conceptual framework, tools and a methodology to complement and support the work of EPP.

485. Another delegation noted that ICDC required additional funding in the face of declining resources. He stated that there should be closer collaboration between ICDC and other United Nations research bodies, for example the United Nations Research Institute for Social Development (UNRISD), to bring about

complementarity of approaches. The Director said that the groundwork for closer cooperation with other United Nations research institutes had already been laid. The Centre cooperated with UNRISD and with the United Nations Staff College in Turin. ICDC was also working with the World Bank in establishing a global development network. There was need for increased cooperation with more partners, including research institutes in the developing world, and plans were already under way. She stated that the Executive Director had asked ICDC to take the lead on behalf of UNICEF.

486. A number of delegations expressed appreciation for the support of the Government of Italy. The delegation of the host country stated that his Government was actively considering additional measures to strengthen cooperation between ICDC and the Italian host institution, the *Istituto degli Innocenti*.

487. A number of delegations said that ICDC research should be translated into policy guidelines and tools for field work. It was noted that the documents produced were not easily accessible, and it was suggested that targeting of materials be improved to reach a much wider audience. Links should be forged with the overall IT strategy at UNICEF. The Internet and other electronic media should be used to greater advantage. The Director replied that translating research findings into policy was a very important facet and priority of ICDC work. She noted that she was a member of the GMT and an active participant in the Programme Group. Many practical experiences, for example, that of the child protection officer in Burundi, would be applied in other areas. The Centre, she continued, was focusing on dissemination of the many findings to a much broader public; work was being done on the ICDC website, and other forms of electronic media were being considered.

488. Centre publications should be translated into languages other than English. One delegation emphasized the importance of the publications and noted that his country's National Committee had translated and distributed many ICDC publications. He noted further that his Government was exploring the possibility of financing concrete projects in cooperation with the National Committee and would also establish cooperation with specialized national research centres. The Director acknowledged that the issue of translation of publications was an important one. Limitations had been determined by inadequate resources, but the Centre was working to change this. She noted that some field offices did their own translations, and National Committees had also been active in this regard.

489. More details on the budget and on the work plan for the next three years were requested. Clarification was requested on the role of ICDC within UNICEF, and it was suggested that there be closer coordination. One delegation wanted information on the role of ICDC in the preparation for the Special Session of the General Assembly on follow-up to the World Summit for Children.

490. The new areas of focus - child trafficking and children in conflict - were welcomed. It was suggested that the limited resources be focused on children in sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia rather than on children in industrialized countries. The Director agreed that there must be a balance between work on developing and industrialized countries, with a primary focus on the developing world. In recent years, there had been an emphasis on the countries of Central and Eastern Europe, the CIS and the Baltic States region because ICDC staff had skills in these areas. This was changing, however, as vacant positions were being filled by development economists.

491. Delegations also mentioned the need to maintain a gender perspective in all work being done. Because behavioural change was a priority of UNICEF, the Centre should also develop and test mechanisms in this area.

492. The view was expressed that HIV/AIDS should be a focus of the Centre's work, and strategies for intervention should be identified. The Centre was urged to go beyond examining the economic implications and look at the social implications of the pandemic. There should also be a geographic expansion of focus areas. New evaluations should be conducted to look at implementation of

the recommendations of earlier evaluations. ICDC was commended for its collaboration with UNICEF, the International Labour Organization and the World Bank on collection of data on child labour. (See the annex, decision 1999/18, for the text of the decision adopted by the Executive Board.)

M. Programme of work for 2000

493. The programme of work for Executive Board sessions in 2000 (E/ICEF/1999/19) was presented by the Secretary of the Board, who remarked at the outset that as 2000 would be a transition year, the programme of work was subject to revision based on further consultation and future Board decisions. He explained that three sets of issues would have an impact on the work programme: (a) resource mobilization for UNICEF work; (b) plans, such as the MTP, CPRs, etc.; and (c) reporting on results.

494. Regarding the joint session, one delegation wondered whether the subject to be discussed had been set or if other subjects could be proposed. The Secretary of the Board replied that the topics of the joint session would be discussed by the Bureau of UNICEF Executive Board and then at a joint meeting of the Bureaux of the UNICEF, UNDP/UNFPA and WFP Boards.

495. Several delegations commented on the annual session. One delegation expressed satisfaction with the earlier dates of the session and asked if future sessions could also be held around the same time. Another speaker said that he hoped the organization of the next annual session would build on the experience of the 1999 session, which had been very useful and had ensured a higher level of participation. The Secretary of the Board explained that the dates of the annual session had only been set for 2000; future dates were still under discussion and would be determined based on the availability of conference services. He acknowledged that the secretariat aimed to make the annual sessions more lively and agreed that the use of guest speakers had been very positive. He said that he would return to this issue at a later date. He also voiced concern about the dates of the second regular session as preparations must be undertaken in August.

496. At the request of several delegations, the Secretary of the Board agreed to provide delegations with a provisional list of the countries submitting country notes at the first regular session of 2000. (See the annex, decision 1999/19, for the text of the decision adopted by the Executive Board.)

N. Other matters

Draft decisions

497. Delegations were reminded that at the annual session in June, the Board had decided to defer discussion of two draft decisions - "General resources allocation to Asian countries" (E/ICEF/1999/CRP.10) and "Arsenic contamination of drinking water in Bangladesh" (E/ICEF/1999/CRP.11) - until the present session.

498. The delegation of Bangladesh circulated document E/ICEF/1999/CRP.16/Rev.1, a revised draft of E/ICEF/1999/CRP.10. He stated that the introduction of the draft decision was not an attempt to reopen decision 1997/18 (E/ICEF/1997/12/Rev.1) on the modified system for allocation of general resources for programmes. He wanted the Board to be aware of the issue and wished to note the decline in resources to his region. He was aware that decision 1997/18 would come up for review in 2003, but he felt it important that the Board be "seized" by the matter. He stated that his delegation would bring this issue up from time to time and asked that the Board keep the matter high on its agenda. He hoped that the draft decision would be accepted by consensus.

499. One delegation noted that there was a factual error in document E/ICEF/1999/CRP.16/Rev.1 - that, in fact, there had not been a decline in resources to the region. He expressed his opposition to the Board adopting the

decision. Another delegation stated that this issue should not be taken up until 2003 and that discussions at this stage would prejudice later reviews.

500. The delegation of Bangladesh also circulated document E/ICEF/1999/CRP.17, a revised draft of E/ICEF/1999/CRP.11, on arsenic contamination of drinking water in Bangladesh. One delegation said that there was strong sympathy for the tragedy and that his country had carried out an evaluation on the contamination. Speaking on behalf of the Western European and Others group, he welcomed a broader discussion and update from the secretariat, but could not support adoption of the decision. He expressed the view that this should be handled at the country level or at the Board during the discussion of country programmes. Another delegation shared this view and stated that the Board session was not the forum to discuss specific problems, as such discussions would hamper the work of the Board.

501. The delegation of Bangladesh responded that issues should be discussed on the basis of merit and not in a North-South context.

502. The Executive Director remarked that UNICEF was working with its partners to deal with the problem of arsenic contamination, and she offered to make an oral report to the Board. With regard to funding for Asia, there were additional resources for programmes, and funding had increased for the year 2000, although in terms of percentages, it had decreased.

503. Following consultations, it was agreed that the secretariat would make an oral presentation on implementation of decision 1997/18 at the second regular session in 2000. Regarding arsenic contamination, the President read the following prepared statement: "Following the discussion on this subject, informal consultations will continue in the context of the country programme for Bangladesh. The Executive Director is therefore requested to present an oral report at the first regular session of the Board in January 2000 on the subject matter regarding efforts being made by UNICEF in coordination with United Nations agencies, Bretton Woods institutions and the Government of Bangladesh".

504. On the issue of arsenic contamination, the delegation of Bangladesh conveyed his appreciation to both the President and Vice-President of the Asian group of States for their efforts in working to resolve this matter in the spirit of consensus. He reiterated that this was a matter of high priority for his Government, and he hoped that all delegations would understand his Government's position and respect the nature of their concerns. It was important, he added, for the Board to take note of the concerns of children wherever they lived and for consultations to continue. He informed the Board of his delegation's intention to request that the draft decisions be revisited in 2000 in conjunction with the oral reports.

Tribute

505. The Executive Director announced with great regret the death on 5 September of Dr. Kamal Islam, Chief of the Field Office in Calcutta, India. UNICEF staff work very hard and put themselves in difficult circumstances. A native of Bangladesh, Dr. Islam was a medical doctor with a very successful career in public health. He brought his experience to UNICEF in April 1991 as Project Officer and Deputy Chief, Health and Nutrition Section in Bangladesh. He then served for a number of years as part of the nutrition team in India. He was both energetic and committed, and worked tirelessly in the area of micronutrients, making sure that low birth weight was put on the national agenda.

Documentation

506. On the subject of Board documentation, one delegation expressed appreciation for the timely availability of documents on the UNICEF Extranet. For the second regular session, however, many documents had tables that were not available on the Extranet. She requested that this problem be resolved before the first regular session of 2000 and that alternative ways be found to make

sure that delegations had access to all information in the documents. She further requested that documents be made available on the Internet, as is the practice of UNDP. The Secretary of the Board replied that to ensure that Board members had all information, mailings would continue. In addition, he advised that the problems with the tables had been resolved. The same delegation said that if that was the case, the mailings would be unnecessary, but further requested that the secretariat might wish to look into getting the documents on the Internet as well, as was the practice of UNDP.

507. In response to several queries, the Secretary of the Board agreed to amend the programme of work. He added that, in all likelihood, there would be further modifications, especially as a result of the discussion on the MYFF at the first regular session of 2000.

O. Closing of the session

508. The Executive Director thanked delegations for their comments, questions, advice and guidance. She expressed her appreciation for their support of the biennial support budget and CPRs. She said that she would share the Board views at headquarters and in the field. She looked forward to informal sessions between the end of the Board and the first regular session of 2000, beginning with the informal meetings that would immediately follow the close of the current session. She also looked forward to increasing interaction with Board members on a geographic basis to discuss informally issues and challenges being confronted and which she hoped would be overcome in the next several months.

509. She congratulated the President for his energetic and active interest and leadership. She stated that the new Secretary of the Board had provided extraordinary leadership and she expressed her appreciation to the secretariat, the Office of Conference Services and the interpreters. The Executive Board, she said, was key to the ultimate successes for children.

510. In his closing remarks, the President of the Executive Board spoke of the Declaration and Programme of Action on the Culture of Peace, which would be adopted by the General Assembly on 13 September. At the JCE meeting on which he reported earlier in the session, there was a rich discussion on UNICEF and UNESCO promoting a culture of peace. General Resolution 53/25 was the culmination of nine months of intense informal consultations, under the skilled chairmanship of the Ambassador of Bangladesh, a member of the JCE and Executive Board. These efforts would enable further collaboration between UNICEF and UNESCO, especially in the context of the International Decade for a Culture of Peace and Non-violence for the Children of the World (2001-2010).

511. He thanked the Executive Director for her interest, concern and energetic participation. He also expressed appreciation for the work of the Deputy Executive Directors, the Secretary of the Executive Board and the entire secretariat. Serving as President had been a rewarding experience, and he had learned a great deal from working with the secretariat and leadership of UNICEF. He thanked members of the Board for their understanding, cooperation and support, and assured those assembled that his personal association with UNICEF would continue.

Annex

DECISIONS ADOPTED BY THE EXECUTIVE BOARD DURING 1999

Number	Title
	First regular session
1999/1.	Election of Executive Board representatives to the joint committees for the 1999-2000 biennium
1999/2.	Private Sector Division work plan and proposed budget for 1999
1999/3.	Report on progress in implementing the biennial support budget for 1998-1999
1999/4.	Financial matters
1999/5.	1999 UNICEF Maurice Pate Award
1999/6.	Annual report to the Economic and Social Council
1999/7.	Revised elements for inclusion in part II of the Executive Director's annual report
1999/8.	Resource mobilization strategy
	Annual session
1999/9.	Progress report on follow-up to the World Summit for Children
	Second regular session
1999/10.	Financial medium-term plan for the period 1999-2002
1999/11.	Report to the United Nations Board of Auditors and the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions
1999/12.	UNICEF support to the United Nations General Assembly Special Session on the follow-up to the World Summit for Children in 2001 and additional events
1999/13.	Proposals for UNICEF programme cooperation
1999/14.	Intercountry programmes
1999/15.	Internal audit activities in 1998
1999/16.	Report on the seventh meeting of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization/UNICEF Joint Committee on Education
1999/17.	Financial matters
1999/18.	International Child Development Centre: progress report and proposed activities for 2000-2002
1999/19.	Programme of work for Executive Board sessions in 2000
1999/20.	Biennial support budget for 2000-2001
1999/21.	Amendments to the UNICEF financial regulations

First regular session

1999/1. Election of Executive Board representatives to the joint committees for the 1999-2000 biennium

The Executive Board

1. *Decides* to elect the following members and alternates to the World Health Organization/UNICEF/United Nations Population Fund Coordinating Committee on Health for the 1999-2000 biennium:

(a) From the African group of States, Dr. Attiyat Mustapha (Sudan) as member;

(b) From the Asian group of States, H.E. Mr. Mohamed Al-Sindi as member and Mr. Walid Al-Ethary as alternate (Yemen);

(c) From the Eastern European group of States, Dr. Pavel Biskup (Czech Republic) as member;

(d) From the Latin American and Caribbean group of States, Mr. Samuel Aymer (Antiqua and Barbuda) as member;

(e) From the Western European and Others group of States, Dr. Birte Holm Sorensen (Denmark) as member;

2. *Decides* to elect the following members and alternates to the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization/UNICEF Joint Committee on Education for the 1999-2000 biennium:

(a) From the African group of States, Mr. Souef Amine as member and Mr. Ahamada Hamadi as alternate (Comoros);

(b) From the Asian group of States, H.E. Mr. Anwarul Karim Chowdhury as member and Mr. Muhammad Ali Sorcar as alternate (Bangladesh);

(c) From the Eastern European group of States, Mrs. Fatma Abdullazadeh (Azerbaijan) as member;

(d) From the Latin American and Caribbean group of States, Mrs. Celsa Bareiro (Paraguay) as member;

(e) From the Western European and Others group of States, Ms. Myra Harrison as member and Mr. Steve Packer as alternate (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland);

3. *Agrees* that the candidates to be proposed by the regional groups that have not yet submitted nominations to the joint committees will be considered elected upon receipt by the secretariat of a letter from the Chairman of the respective regional group confirming the nominations.

First regular session
19 January 1999

1999/2. Private Sector Division work plan and proposed budget for 1999

A. Private Sector Division budgeted expenditures for the 1999 season

The Executive Board

1. Approves for the fiscal year 1 January to 31 December 1999 budgeted expenditures of $88.8 million as detailed below and summarized in column II of table 7 to document E/ICEF/1999/AB/L.5:

	(In millions of United States dollars)
Commissions - field offices	2.5
Cost of goods delivered	35.4
Marketing expenditures	21.3
Support Services	16.6
Market Development Programme (MDP)	4.0
Fund-raising Development Programme (FDP)	8.5
Central and Eastern European National Committees Development Programme	0.5
Total expenditures, consolidated a/	88.8

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a/ For details, see E/ICEF/1999/AB/L.5, table 2.

2. Authorizes the Executive Director:

(a) To incur expenditures as summarized in column II of table 7 to document E/ICEF/1999/AB/L.5 and to increase the expenditures up to the level indicated in column III of the same table should the apparent proceeds from product sales and/or private sector fund-raising increase to the levels indicated in column III, and accordingly, to reduce expenditures below the level indicated in column II to the extent necessary, should the net proceeds decrease;

(b) To redeploy resources between the various budget lines (as detailed in paragraph 1 above) up to a maximum of 10 per cent of the amounts approved;

(c) To spend an additional amount between Executive Board sessions, when necessary, up to the amount caused by currency fluctuations, to implement the 1999 approved work plan.

B. Budgeted income for the 1999 season

The Executive Board

Notes that for the period 1 January to 31 December 1999, Private Sector Division (PSD) net proceeds are budgeted at $284.3 million (general resources) as shown in column II of table 7 to document E/ICEF/1999/AB/L.5.

C. Policy issues

The Executive Board

1. Approves the changes in posts with a net decrease of four posts as indicated in annexes I and III to document E/ICEF/1999/AB/L.5;

2. Renews MDP with $4.0 million established for 1999;

3. Renews FDP with $8.5 million established for 1999;

4. Renews the Central and Eastern European National Committees Development Programme, which includes nine countries, with a budget of $0.5 million established for 1999;

5. Authorizes the Executive Director to incur expenditures in the 1999 fiscal period related to the cost of goods delivered (production/purchase of raw materials, cards and other products) for the 2000 fiscal year up to $37.1 million as indicated in the PSD medium-term plan (see table 6 of document E/ICEF/1999/AB/L.5).

D. Medium-term plan

The Executive Board

Approves the PSD medium-term plan.

First regular session
20 January 1999

1999/3. Report on progress in implementing the biennial support budget for 1998-1999

The Executive Board

Takes note of the "Report on progress in implementing the biennial support budget for 1998-1999" (E/ICEF/1999/AB/L.1).

First regular session
21 January 1999

1999/4. Financial matters

The Executive Board

Takes note of the following reports:

(a) "UNICEF financial report and audited financial statements for the biennium ended 31 December 1997 and report of the Board of Auditors" (A/53/5/Add.2);

(b) "Report to the United Nations Board of Auditors and the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgeting Questions" (E/ICEF/1998/AB/L.9).

First regular session
21 January 1999

1999/5. 1999 UNICEF Maurice Pate Award

The Executive Board

1. Decides to present the 1998 UNICEF Maurice Pate Award to the Tanzanian non-governmental organization kuleana;

2. Approves an allocation of $25,000 from general resources for that purpose.

First regular session
21 January 1999

1999/6. Annual report to the Economic and Social Council

The Executive Board

1. Notes that in its discussion of the reports of the Executive Director to the Economic and Social Council in 1996, 1997, 1998 and 1999 (E/ICEF/1996/10 (Part I), E/ICEF/1997/10 (Part I), E/ICEF/1998/4 (Part I) and E/ICEF/1999/4 (Part I) respectively), the Executive Board called for more analytical and problem-oriented reporting, including in decision 1998/1 (E/ICEF/1998/6/Rev.1), for future reports to include and identify issues which would require particular consideration of the Executive Board and the Economic and Social Council;

2. Welcomes the progress towards this goal, but notes that more is needed;

3. Recalls Economic and Social Council resolution 1998/27 of 28 July 1998, which, inter alia, requests the Executive Boards of the United Nations funds and programmes to ensure that the heads of these funds and programmes include in their annual reports to the Economic and Social Council a thorough analysis of problems encountered and lessons learned;

4. Requests the Executive Director to ensure that future reports to the Economic and Social Council advance the Executive Board's wish for greater analytical effort, selected focus on key issues, problem-oriented reporting and discussions of lessons learned;

5. Requests the Executive Director to transmit document E/ICEF/1999/4 (Part I) to the Economic and Social Council, together with the comments made by delegations at the present session;

6. Welcomes the statement of the Executive Director that, as called for in Economic and Social Council resolution 1998/27, she will join in providing to the Council, in consultation with other members of the United Nations Development Group, a concise, consolidated list of issues that are central to the improved coordination of related operational activities.

First regular session
22 January 1999

1999/7. Revised elements for inclusion in part II of the Executive Director's annual report

The Executive Board

1. Welcomes recent proposals by the Executive Director regarding the contents of this year's annual report;

2. Decides that, starting from 2000:

(a) Information in part II of the Executive Director's report should be presented to the Executive Board in a way that facilitates monitoring of progress in achieving the objectives in programmes and activities within the framework of organizational priorities in the medium-term plan (MTP);

(b) The Executive Director's annual report (part II) should be developed as an analytical report of annual global progress in the priority areas of the MTP in a manner that links planning, programming, budgeting and outcomes, and should include a review of the following:

(i) Objectives and results achieved, aggregated qualitatively and/or quantitatively, in areas of action set out in the organizational priorities of the MTP, in particular those which respond to national priorities reflected in UNICEF country programmes of cooperation;

(ii) An estimate of financial resources applied to these areas of action;

(iii) Main obstacles encountered;

(iv) Main lessons learned and implications for the future work of UNICEF;

(v) Other issues of special interest to the Executive Board (such as how UNICEF collaboration with other United Nations agencies, including through the United Nations Development Assistance Framework, affects the success of specific country programmes).

First regular session
22 January 1999

1999/8. Resource mobilization strategy

The Executive Board

1. *Decides* to adopt this resource mobilization strategy in accordance with General Assembly resolution 50/227 of 24 May 1996 and Economic and Social Council resolution 1997/59 of 24 July 1997;

2. *Welcomes* the resource mobilization strategy of UNICEF in support of its role as the lead United Nations agency for children, especially with regard to supporting national efforts to reach the goals of the World Summit for Children and to implement the Convention on the Rights of the Child;

3. *Welcomes* the UNICEF medium-term plan (MTP) as a core element in the resource mobilization strategy and as a flexible, evolving, multi-year strategic framework that integrates a vision for children for the next century, and lays down the organizational priorities and major areas of action of UNICEF and the financial framework;

4. *Notes*, in this context, that the financial part of the MTP for 1998-2001 forecasts an annual growth in income of 3 to 4 per cent to be used for planned organizational expenditures, and *further notes* that the plan's estimated funding target of an annual growth in income of 7 per cent is established for the purpose of resource mobilization and to achieve UNICEF programme priorities;

5. *Endorses* the funding target of an annual growth in income of 7 per cent, to reach $1.5 billion by 2005, as a challenge for the mobilization of general resources and supplementary funds from Governments and from the private sector and all other donors;

6. *Expresses* appreciation to the National Committees for UNICEF for their invaluable contribution to UNICEF, which accounts for about one third of the organization's total income, and *requests* the secretariat, especially through the Regional Office for Europe, the Private Sector Division and the Division of Communication, to continue to support the Committees' efforts;

7. *Decides* that UNICEF shall adopt and develop a multi-year funding framework (see annex) that conceptually integrates UNICEF organizational priorities and major areas of action, resources, budget and outcomes:

(a) With the objectives of:

(i) Increasing general resources, making general resources more assured and predictable and improving burden-sharing among donors, while maintaining the voluntary nature of contributions to UNICEF;

(ii) Strengthening the planning of activities with the formulation of overall objectives for areas of action in the MTP, with an estimateof UNICEF financial resources applied to these areas and with annual reporting on the outcome of these areas, while taking into account the specificity of UNICEF country programmes;

(b) And further taking into account the following principles:

(i) The multi-year funding framework shall maintain the priorities and respect the mandate of UNICEF;

(ii) The framework shall not introduce any conditionality or result in distortions of priorities or changes in the current system of resource allocation;

8. Decides, to this end, to adopt the following measures:

(a) At the first regular session each year Governments which are able to do so will:

(i) Announce their voluntary contributions to UNICEF general resources, as follows: a firm funding commitment for the current year; for those in a position to do so, a firm contribution or indication of the contribution for the following year, and a firm or tentative contribution for the third year;

(ii) Announce their payment schedules for the current year. Early payments should be encouraged;

(b) Governments which are not able to take the action described in subparagraphs (a)(i) and (ii) above at the first regular session will communicate their contribution to the Executive Board and the secretariat once their budgetary processes are complete, if possible no later than April;

(c) In the context of the MTP, the secretariat, as appropriate, will hold consultations with individual Governments on the possibility of increased contributions to general resources;

(d) To strengthen the multi-year funding framework, UNICEF will develop part II of the annual report of the Executive Director in accordance with decision 1999/7;

(e) As an element of part II of the annual report, the secretariat will prepare an analysis of the payments received against payment schedules, to be included in an analysis of the availability of resources, their predictability, as well as obstacles, constraints and future potential introduced by the multi-year funding framework. This analysis will be discussed by the Executive Board at its annual session;

9. Further decides that UNICEF shall adopt the following measures concerning contributions to supplementary funds:

(a) For regular supplementary funds:

(i) In its consultations with donor Governments, the secretariat will explore thematic, multi-country approaches and will report annually on the results of these efforts as well as on traditional contributions to supplementary funds;

(ii) The secretariat will develop a new reporting system with donor Governments and National Committees and propose it to the Executive Board;

(b) For emergency contributions:

(i) Where possible, Governments will provide an early indication and commitment of planned contributions for emergency programmes for the year, upon receipt of consolidated appeals from the Office of the Coordinator for Humanitarian Assistance;

(ii) Wherever possible, UNICEF and donor Governments will establish framework agreements, to be discussed in the course of consultations;

(iii) Governments will consider providing maximum flexibility in using funds for the most urgent needs as they emerge in rapidly shifting emergency situations, giving UNICEF greater discretion in moving funds between sectors or within regions. These measures could include, for example, leaving 20 per cent of a contribution as non-earmarked;

(iv) The secretariat will explore what level of flexibility will be possible for each government donor and report on the results of these discussions;

(v) A revised reporting system will be developed and proposed to the Board, to provide an overall general report for each specific appeal, accompanied by a summary of contributions from various sources and of total expenditures, broken down by sector;

10. Requests the Executive Director to propose at the first regular session in 2000 a plan on the timing of the presentation to the Executive Board of the various elements of the multi-year funding framework, with a view to enhancing their interlinkages;

11. Further requests the Executive Director to make oral reports to the Board at its remaining sessions in 1999 about progress in the preparation of the proposals mentioned in paragraph 10 above;

12. Finally requests the Executive Director to report to the Executive Board each year, in part II of her annual report to the Board, on the progress made to date in the implementation of the present decision.

Annex

The UNICEF multi-year funding framework is an approach to resource mobilization composed of the following elements:

(a) The four-year MTP which integrates UNICEF organizational priorities, resources and budget;

(b) The biennial support budget;

(c) An analytical annual report by the Executive Director (part II) that facilitates monitoring of progress in achieving the objectives identified for the areas of activities set out in the organizational priorities of the MTP;

(d) The announcement by Governments of their voluntary contributions for a particular current year, together with firm or indicative contributions for future years, as well as a discussion by the UNICEF Executive Board of an analysis prepared by the secretariat about the availability of resources;

(e) The holding of consultations by the secretariat with individual Governments on their contributions to general resources.

First regular session
22 January 1999

Annual session

1999/9. Progress report on follow-up to the World Summit for Children

The Executive Board

1. Notes with satisfaction the overall progress being made in the implementation of the Declaration of the World Summit for Children and its contribution to the realization of children's rights;

2. Recognizes that extraordinary efforts are needed to accelerate progress towards the end-decade goals and, in this context, urges Governments in programme countries to adopt appropriate strategies and to allocate to the maximum extent possible resources for action;

3. Also recognizes the economic and social difficulties faced by developing countries and countries with economies in transition in achieving the goals of the World Summit for Children, especially for countries facing a debt burden;

4. Encourages Governments to conduct periodic national and subnational reviews of progress in achieving the World Summit for Children goals, and in the broader context of the implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child;

5. Requests donor Governments, in their endeavours to reverse the decline in official development assistance, to allocate to the maximum extent possible resources to support the achievement of the World Summit for Children goals and to ensure universal access to basic social services;

6. Requests the Executive Director to continue to advocate for and support efforts by national Governments and other relevant actors in civil society to achieve the end-decade goals, within the framework of national and subnational programmes of action;

7. Requests the Executive Director to continue to work with Governments to strengthen further national capacities for the collection and use of data to monitor progress towards the end-decade goals;

8. Requests the Executive Director to support the Secretary-General in the preparation of the end-decade review in 2001, including an overall assessment of progress achieved and lessons learned during the decade, an analysis of the main factors that have inhibited progress, an overview of remaining challenges and issues, and specific recommendations for the future;

9. Further requests the Executive Director to report to the Executive Board on the implementation of the present decision at the 2000 annual session.

Annual session
11 June 1999

Second regular session

1999/10. Financial medium-term plan for the period 1999-2002

The Executive Board

1. Takes note of the medium-term plan (MTP) (E/ICEF/1999/AB/L.11) as a flexible framework for supporting UNICEF programmes;

2. Approves the MTP as a framework of projections for 1999-2002 (summarized in table 5 of E/ICEF/1999/AB/L.11), including the preparation of up to $656 million in programme expenditures from regular resources to be submitted to the Executive Board in 2000 (shown in table 4, item 3 of E/ICEF/1999/AB/L.11). The amount is subject to the availability of resources and to the condition that estimates of income and expenditure made in this plan continue to be valid.

Second regular session
7 September 1999

1999/11. Report to the United Nations Board of Auditors and the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions

The Executive Board

Takes note of the "Report to the United Nations Board of Auditors and the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions" (E/ICEF/1999/AB/L.8).

Second regular session
8 September 1999

1999/12. UNICEF support to the United Nations General Assembly Special Session on the follow-up to the World Summit for Children in 2001 and additional events

The Executive Board

Decides:

That a supplementary-funded budget of $2,000,000 is approved for the year 2000, subject to availability of specific-purpose contributions, as follows:

	(In United States dollars)
Staff costs	900 000
Operating costs	250 000
Communication	350 000
Country support	350 000
Meeting services and support	150 000
Total	2 000 000

Second regular session
8 September 1999

1999/13. Proposals for UNICEF programme cooperation

The Executive Board

1. Approves the following recommendations of the Executive Director for programme cooperation as summarized in document E/ICEF/1999/P/L.16 and Corr.1:

(a) $129,276,724 for general resources funding and $127,598,000 for supplementary funding for programme cooperation in Africa, as follows:

Country	Period	General resources	Supplementary funds	Document E/ICEF/1999/
Botswana	2000-2002	2 073 000	1 782 000	P/L.17
Burundi	2000	2 266 000	4 400 000	P/L.18
Burundi	1999	102 724	-	P/L.18
Cape Verde	2000-2004	3 115 000	2 250 000	P/L.9/Add.1
Democratic Republic of the Congo	2000-2002	46 030 000	19 500 000	P/L.21
Ethiopia	2000-2001	30 790 000	27 150 000	P/L.19
Niger	2000-2004	31 672 000	13 500 000	P/L.10/Add.1
Sierra Leone	2000-2001	4 837 000	9 548 700	P/L.22
Uganda	2000	-	11 967 300	P/L.20
Zimbabwe	2000-2004	8 391 000	37 500 000	P/L.8/Add.1

(b) $7,640,000 for general resources funding and $37,250,000 for supplementary funding for programme cooperation in the Americas and the Caribbean, as follows:

Country	Period	General resources	Supplementary funds	Document E/ICEF/1999/
Colombia	2000-2001	1 666 000	4 000 000	P/L.23 and Corr.1
Guyana	2000	655 000	250 000	P/L.24
Haiti	2000-2001	3 902 000	7 000 000	P/L.25
Paraguay	2000-2001	1 417 000	1 000 000	P/L.26
Central America subregional	1999-2001	-	25 000 000	P/L.27

(c) $26,461,000 for general resources funding and $18,000,000 for supplementary funding for programme cooperation in Asia, as follows:

Country	Period	General resources	Supplementary funds	Document E/ICEF/1999/
Afghanistan	2000-2002	26 461 000	18 000 000	P/L.28

(d) $45,828,515 for general resources funding and $58,938,000 for supplementary funding for programme cooperation in Central and Eastern Europe, the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) and the Baltic States, as follows:

Country	Period	General resources	Supplementary funds	Document E/ICEF/1999/
Armenia	2000-2004	3 430 000	7 000 000	P/L.12/Add.1
Azerbaijan	2000-2004	4 519 000	11 756 000	P/L.13/Add.1
Kazakhstan	2000-2004	4 500 000	7 500 000	P/L.15/Add.1
Kyrgyzstan	2000-2004	4 038 000	2 500 000	P/L.15/Add.1
Romania	2000-2004	3 625 000	8 932 000	P/L.14/Add.1
Tajikistan	2000-2004	6 080 000	1 500 000	P/L.15/Add.1
Turkmenistan	2000-2004	4 288 000	1 250 000	P/L.15/Add.1
Uzbekistan	2000-2004	8 070 000	12 500 000	P/L.15/Add.1
Uzbekistan	1999	278 515	-	P/L.15/Add.1
Central and Eastern Europe/CIS/Baltic States multi-country	2000-2001	7 000 000	6 000 000	P/L.29

(e) $9,722,000 for general resources funding and $2,500,000 for supplementary funding for programme cooperation in the Middle East and North Africa, as follows:

Country	Period	General resources	Supplementary funds	Document E/ICEF/1999/
Iran (Islamic Republic of)	2000-2004	9 722 000	2 500 000	P/L.11/Add.1

2. Approves the amount of $5,815,077 from general resources to cover expenditures against write-off as summarized in table 4 of E/ICEF/1999/P/L.16.

Second regular session
8 and 9 September 1999

1999/14. Intercountry programmes

Resolution 1

General resources programme budget estimates for the 2000-2001 biennium

The Executive Board

Decides:

(a) That a general resources programme budget of $21.1 million is approved (other than the Emergency Programme Fund) for 2000-2001 as per the following details:

	(In thousands of United States dollars)
Headquarters	
Health	1 604
Nutrition	1 388
Education	1 584
Water, environment and sanitation	790
Child protection	573
Intersectoral	2 915
Advocacy and communication	3 260
Planning, evaluation and monitoring	2 404
Emergency	1 395
Subtotal	15 913

Regions	
West and Central Africa	1 007
Eastern and Southern Africa	600
The Americas and the Caribbean	745
Middle East and North Africa	760
South Asia	800
East Asia and the Pacific	644
Central and Eastern Europe, the Commonwealth of Independent States and the Baltic States	600
Subtotal	5 156
Total	21 069

(b) That the budget for the Emergency Programme Fund for 2000-2001 is approved for $25 million;

(c) That the Executive Director be authorized to administer the funds in the most efficient manner under the provision of each of the funds. The Executive Director may, without further authorization from the Executive Board, transfer, if necessary, between the programme fields an amount not exceeding 10 per cent of the approved budget of the fund to which the transfer is being made.

Resolution 2

Supplementary-funded programme budget estimates for the 2000-2001 biennium

The Executive Board

Decides:

(a) That a supplementary-funded programme budget of $237 million is approved for the 2000-2001 biennium, subject to availability of specific-purpose contributions, as follows:

	Headquarters	Region	Country	Total
	(In thousands of United States dollars)			
Regional offices				
West and Central Africa	-	4 100	-	4 100
Eastern and Southern Africa	-	14 800	-	14 800
The Americas and the Caribbean	-	8 000	-	8 000
Middle East and North Africa	-	2 000	-	2 000
South Asia	-	6 700	-	6 700
East Asia and the Pacific	-	9 000	-	9 000
Central and Eastern Europe, the Commonwealth of Independent States and the Baltic States	-	2 000	-	2 000
Subtotal	-	46 600	-	46 600

Health	5 137	-	76 400	81 537
Nutrition	9 328	-	3 700	13 028
Education	2 861	-	2 000	4 861
Water, environment and sanitation	400	-	3 000	3 400
Child protection	2 550	-	2 900	5 450
Intersectoral	5 800	-	3 400	9 200
Advocacy and communication	12 440	-	-	12 440
Emergency	6 700	-	30 000	36 700
Planning, evaluation and monitoring	6 793	500	1 500	8 793
Information technology and the Programme Manager System	11 000	1 000	3 000	15 000
Subtotal	63 009	1 500	125 900	190 409
Total	63 009	48 100	125 900	237 009

(b) That for the biennium 2000-2001, a total recommendation of $237 million for supplementary funding is approved. If necessary, funds in excess of indicated amounts for specific programme areas and regions can be received provided that the total amount of funds received is within the approved limit.

Second regular session
9 September 1999

1999/15. Internal audit activities in 1998

The Executive Board

Takes note of the report on "Internal audit activities in 1998" (E/ICEF/1999/AB/L.14).

Second regular session
9 September 1999

1999/16. Report on the seventh meeting of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization/UNICEF Joint Committee on Education

The Executive Board

Takes note of the report on the seventh meeting of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization/UNICEF Joint Committee on Education, as contained in document E/ICEF/1999/18, and of the recommendations contained therein.

Second regular session
9 September 1999

1999/17. Financial matters

The Executive Board

Takes note of the following reports:

(a) "Interim financial report and statements for the year ended 31 December 1998, the first year of the biennium 1998-1999" (E/ICEF/1999/AB/L.12);

(b) "Private Sector Division - financial report and statements for the year ended 31 December 1998" (E/ICEF/1999/AB/L.13).

Second regular session
9 September 1999

1999/18. International Child Development Centre: progress report and proposed activities for 2000-2002

The Executive Board,

Having reviewed the report on the "International Child Development Centre: progress report and proposed activities for 2000-2002" (E/ICEF/1999/16),

Authorizes a three-year extension for the Centre for the period 2000-2002 with a total allocation of $12.8 million in supplementary funding, of which the Government of Italy has pledged to provide a minimum of 10.5 billion lire (approximately $6 million) for the Centre's core activities, with the remainder to be sought from other donors for specific activities.

Second regular session
9 September 1999

1999/19. Programme of work for Executive Board sessions in 2000

The Executive Board

Adopts the following programme of work for Executive Board sessions in 2000 as contained in document E/ICEF/1999/19:

First regular session (17-21 January)	• Report of the Executive Director (Part I): Annual report to the Economic and Social Council (1995/5, 1998/1 and 1999/6) • Private Sector Division (PSD) work plan and proposed budget for 2000 (1998/1) • Country notes (1995/8) • Multi-year funding framework (1999/8) • Pledging event • Report on the second meeting of the WHO/UNICEF/UNFPA Coordinating Committee on Health • UNICEF Maurice Pate Award for 2000 • Joint meeting with UNDP/UNFPA on United Nations Development Assistance Framework

Annual session
(22-26 May)

- Report of the Executive Director (Part II) (1999/7 and 1999/8)
- Medium-term plan for the period 2000-2003) (1990/1, 1998/22)
- The future global vision for children - imperatives for the twenty-first century
- Follow-up to the World Summit for Children (1998/13 and 1999/9)
- Oral report on the United Nations General Assembly Special Session 2001
- UNICEF emergency operations (1997/7)
- Summary of mid-term reviews and major evaluations of country programmes (1995/8)
- Field visits of Executive Board members

Second regular session
(18-22 September)

- Oral report on decisions taken by the Economic and Social Council (1995/38 and E/ICEF/1995/9/Rev.1, para. 470)
- Country programme recommendations (1995/8)
- PSD financial report/statements
- Internal audit activities (1997/28)
- Report on the Financial Regulations and Rules of UNICEF
- UNICEF financial report and statements for the biennium ended 31 December 1999 and report of the Board of Auditors*
- Report to the United Nations Board of Auditors and the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions*
- Programme of work for 2001

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* If the report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions is not available for review by the Executive Board at this session, the items will be included in the agenda of the first regular session of 2001.

Second regular session
9 September 1999

1999/20. Biennial support budget for 2000-2001

The Executive Board,

Having considered the biennial support budget for 2000-2001, as contained in document E/ICEF/1999/AB/L.7,

1. Takes note of the 2000-2001 biennial support budget estimates of UNICEF, as contained in document E/ICEF/1999/AB/L.7, as well as of the report of

the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (E/ICEF/1999/AB/L.10) and the comments made by delegations during the consideration of the biennial support budget;

2. *Approves* gross appropriations in the amount of $545,513,700 for purposes indicated below and *resolves* that the income estimates of $52,000,000 shall be used to offset the gross appropriations, resulting in estimated net appropriations of $493,513,700:

	(In thousands of United States dollars)
Programme support:	
Country and regional offices	279 116.8
Headquarters	79 628.4
Subtotal	358 745.2
Management and administration of the organization	186 768.5
Total gross appropriations	545 513.7
Less: Estimated income to the budget	52 000.0
Estimated net appropriations	493 513.7

3. *Authorizes* the Executive Director to redeploy resources between appropriation lines up to a maximum of 5 per cent of the appropriation to which the resources are redeployed.

Second regular session
10 September 1999

1999/21. Amendments to the UNICEF financial regulations

The Executive Board

1. *Takes note* of the report of the Advisory Committee on Adminstrative and Budgetary Questions (ACABQ) (E/ICEF/1999/AB/L.10), in particular paragraphs 36-39;

2. *Approves* the proposed changes to the financial regulations as contained in document E/ICEF/1999/AB/L.9;

3. *Decides* to examine the implications of these amendments, in particular regulation 8.6 on accounting and financial reporting of cash assistance to Governments, in connection with the report of the Board of Auditors for 1998/1999, which will be presented to the Executive Board;

4. *Accepts* the recommendation of ACABQ, contained in paragraph 7 of E/ICEF/1999/AB/L.10, and *requests* UNICEF to amend the relevant financial regulations and rules accordingly.

Second regular session
10 September 1999

E/1999/34/Rev.1
E/ICEF/1999/7/Rev.1